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THE

CANADIAN BROTHERS;

OR,

THE PROPHECY FULFILLED.

A TALE OF THE LATE AMERICAN WAR.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "ECARTÉ," "WACOUSTA," &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I.

A FEW days after the adventure detailed in our last chapter, the American party, consisting of Major and Miss Montgomerie, and the daughters of the Governor, with their attendants, embarked in the schooner, to the command of which Gerald had been promoted. The destination of the whole was the American port of Buffalo, situate at the further extremity of the lake, nearly opposite to the fort of Erie ; and thither our hero, perfectly recovered from the effect of his accident, received instructions to repair without loss of time, land his charge, and immediately rejoin the flotilla at Amherstburg.

However pleasing the first, the latter part of the order was by no means so strictly in consonance with the views and feelings of the new commander, as might have been expected from a young and enterprising spirit ; but he justified his absence of zeal to himself, in the fact that there was no positive service to perform ; no duty in which he could have an opportunity of signalizing himself, or rendering a benefit to his country.

If, however, the limited period allotted for the execution of his duty, was a source of much disappointment to Gerald, such was not the effect produced by it on his brother, to whom it gave *promise* of a speedy termination of an attach-

ment, which he had all along regarded with disapprobation, and a concern amounting almost to dread. We have seen that Henry Grantham, on the occasion of his brother's disaster at the pic-nic, had been wound up into an enthusiasm of gratitude, which had nearly weaned him from his original aversion; but this feeling had not outlived the day on which the occurrence took place. Nay, on the very next morning, he had had a long private conversation with Gerald, in regard to Miss Montgomerie, which, ending as it did, in a partial coolness, had tended to make him dislike the person who had caused it still more. It was, therefore, not without secret delight that he overheard the order for the instant return of the schooner, which, although conveyed by the Commodore in the mildest manner, was yet so firm and decided as to admit neither of doubt nor dispute. While the dangerous American continued a resident at Detroit, there was every reason to fear that the attachment of his infatuated brother, fed by opportunity, would lead him to the commission of some irrevocable act of imprudence; whereas, on the contrary, when she had departed, there was every probability that continued absence, added to the stirring incidents of war, which might be expected shortly to ensue, would prove effectual in restoring the tone of Gerald's mind. There was, consequently, much to please him in the order for departure. Miss Montgomerie once landed within the American lines, and his brother returned to his duty, the anxious soldier had no doubt that the feelings of the latter would resume their wonted channel, and that, in his desire to render himself worthy of glory, to whom he had been originally devoted, he would forget, at least after a season, all that was connected with love.

It was a beautiful autumnal morning, when the schooner weighed anchor from Detroit. Several of the officers of the garrison had accompanied the ladies on board, and having made fast their sailing boat to the stern, loitered on deck with *the intention of* descending the river a few miles, and then

beating up against the current. The whole party were thus assembled, conversing together and watching the movements of the sailors, when a boat, in which were several armed men encircling a huge raw-boned individual, habited in the fashion of an American backwoodsman, approached the vessel. This was no other than the traitor Desborough, who, it will be recollected, was detained and confined in prison at the surrender of Detroit. He had been put upon his trial for the murder of Major Grantham, but had been acquitted through want of evidence to convict, his own original admission being negatived by a subsequent declaration that he had only made it through a spirit of bravado and revenge. Still, as the charges of desertion and treason had been substantiated against him, he was, by order of the Commandant of Amherstburg, destined for Fort Erie, in the schooner conveying the American party to Buffalo, with a view to his being sent on to the Lower Province, there to be disposed of as the General Commanding in Chief should deem fit.

The mien of the settler, as he now stepped over the vessel's side, partook of the mingled cunning and ferocity by which he had formerly been distinguished. While preparations were being made for his reception and security below deck, he bent his sinister, yet bold, glance on each of the little group in succession, as if he would have read in their countenances the probable fate that awaited himself. The last who fell under his scrutiny was Miss Montgomerie, on whom his eye had scarcely rested, when the insolent indifference of his manner seemed to give place at once to a new feeling. There was intelligence enough in the glance of both to show that an insensible interest had been created, and yet neither gave the slightest indication, by word, of what was passing in the mind.

"Well, Mister Jeremiah Desborough," said Middlemore, first breaking the silence, and, in the taunting mode of address he usually adopted towards the settler, "I reckon as how *you'll shoot no wild* ducks this season, on the Sandusky

river—not likely to be much troubled with your small bores now."

The Yankee gazed at him a moment in silence, evidently ransacking his brain for something sufficiently insolent to offer in return. At length, he drew his hat slouchingly over one side of his head, folded his arms across his chest, and squirting a torrent of tobacco juice from his capacious jaws, exclaimed in his drawling voice:

"I guess, Mister Officer, as how you're mighty cute upon a fallen man—but tarnation seize me, if I don't expect you'll find some one cuter still afore long. The sogers all say," he continued with a low, cunning laugh, "as how you're a bit of a wit, and fond of a play upon words like. If so, I'll jist try you a little at your own game, and tell you that I had a thousand to one rather be troubled with my small bores than with such a confounded great bore as you are; and now, you may pit that down as something good, in your pun book when you please, and ax me no more questions."

Long and fitful was the laughter which burst from Villiers and Molineux, at this bitter retort upon their companion, which they vowed should be repeated at the mess table of either garrison, whenever he again attempted one of his execrables.

Desborough took courage at the license conveyed by this pleasantry, and pursued, winking familiarly to Captain Molineux, while he, at the same time, nodded to Middlemore,

"Mighty little time, I calculate, had he to think of aggravatin', when I gripped him down at Hartley's pint, that day. If it hadn't been for that old heathen scoundrel Gattrie, my poor boy Phil, as the Injuns killed, and me, I reckon, would have sent him and young Grantham to crack their puns upon the fishes of the lake. How scared they were, sure*ly*."

"Silence, fellow!" thundered Gerald Grantham, who now *came up from* the hold, whither he had been to examine the *fastenings prepared* for his prisoner. "How dare you open

your lips here ?"—then pointing towards the steps he had just quitted—" descend, sir !"

Never did human countenance exhibit marks of greater rage than Desborough's at that moment. His eyes seemed about to start from their sockets--the large veins of his neck and brow swelled almost to bursting, and while his lips were compressed with violence, his nervous fingers played, as with convulsive anxiety to clutch themselves around the throat of the officer ; every thing, in short, marked the effort it cost him to restrain himself within such bounds as his natural cunning and prudence dictated. Still, he neither spoke nor moved.

" Descend, sir, instantly !" repeated Gerald, " or, by Heaven, I will have you thrown in without further ceremony —descend this moment !"

The settler advanced, placed one foot upon the ladder, then turned his eye steadfastly upon the officer. Every one present shuddered to behold its expression—it was that of fierce, inextinguishable hatred.

" By hell, you will pay me one day or t'other for this, I reckon," he uttered, in a hoarse and fearful whisper— " every dog has his day—it will be Jeremiah Desborough's turn next."

" What ! do you presume to threaten, villain ?" vociferated Gerald, now excited beyond all bounds: " here men, gag me this fellow—tie him neck and heels, and throw him into the hold, as you would a bag of ballast."

Several men, with Sambo at their head, advanced for the purpose of executing the command of their officer, when the eldest daughter of the Governor, who had witnessed the whole scene, suddenly approached the latter, and interceded warmly for a repeal of the punishment. Miss Montgomerie, also, who had been a silent observer, glanced significantly towards the settler. What her look implied, no one was quick enough to detect ; but its effect on the Yankee was evident—for, without uttering another syllable, or waiting to

be again directed, he moved slowly and sullenly down the steps that led to his place of confinement.

Whatever the impressions produced upon the minds of the several spectators by this incident, they were not expressed. No comment was made, nor was further allusion had to the settler. Other topics of conversation were introduced, and it was not until the officers, having bid them a final and cordial adieu, had again taken to their boats, on their way back to Detroit, that the ladies quitted the deck for the cabin which had been prepared for them.

The short voyage down the lake was performed without incident. From the moment of the departure of the officers, an air of dulness and abstraction, originating, in a great degree, in the unpleasantness of separation—anticipated and past—pervaded the little party. Sensitive and amiable as were the daughters of the American Governor, it was not to be supposed that they parted without regret from men in whose society they had recently passed so many agreeable hours, and for two of whom they had insensibly formed preferences. Not, however, that that parting was to be considered final, for both Molineux and Villiers had promised to avail themselves of the first days of peace, to procure leave of absence, and revisit them in their native country. The feeling of disappointment acknowledged by the sisters, was much more perceptible in Gerald Grantham and Miss Montgomerie, both of whom became more thoughtful and abstracted, as the period of separation drew nearer.

It was about ten o'clock on the evening immediately preceding that on which they expected to gain their destination, that, as Gerald leaned ruminating over the side of the schooner, then going at the slow rate of two knots an hour, he fancied he heard voices, in a subdued tone, ascending apparently from the quarter of the vessel in which Desborough was confined. He listened attentively for a few moments, but even *the slight gurgling* of the water, as it was thrown from the

prow, prevented further recognition. Deeming it possible that the sounds might not proceed from the place of confinement of the settler, but from the cabin which it adjoined, and with which it communicated, he was for a short time undecided whether or not he should disturb the party already retired to rest, by descending and passing into the room occupied by his prisoner. Anxiety to satisfy himself that the latter was secure determined him, and he had already planted a foot on the companion-ladder, when his further descent was arrested by Miss Montgomerie, who appeared emerging from the opening, bonneted and cloaked, as with a view of continuing on deck.

"What! you, dearest Matilda?" he asked, delightedly—"I thought you had long since retired to rest."

"To rest, Gerald!—can you, then, imagine mine is a soul to slumber, when I know that tomorrow we part—perhaps for ever?"

"No, by Heaven! not for ever," energetically returned the sailor, seizing and carrying the white hand that pressed his own, to his lips—"be but faithful to me, my own Matilda—love me but with one half the ardor with which my soul glows for you, and the moment duty can be sacrificed to affection, you may expect again to see me."

"Duty!" repeated the American, with something like reproach in her tone—"must the happiness of her you profess so ardently to love, be sacrificed to a mere cold sense of duty? But you are right—you have *your* duty to perform, and I have *mine*. Tomorrow we separate, and for ever."

"No, Matilda—not for ever, unless, indeed, such be your determination. *You* may find the task to forget an easy one—*I* never can. Hope—heart—life—happiness—all are centered in you. Were it not that honour demands my service to my country, I would fly with you tomorrow, delighted to encounter every difficulty fortune might oppose, if, by successfully combating these, I should establish a deeper claim on your affection. Oh, Matilda!" continued the impassioned

youth, "never did I feel more than at this moment, how devotedly I could be your slave for ever."

At the commencement of this conversation, Miss Montgomerie had gently led her lover towards the outer gangway of the vessel, over which they both now leaned. As Gerald made the last passionate avowal of his tenderness, a ray of triumphant expression, clearly visible in the light of the setting moon, passed over the features of the American.

"Gerald," she implored earnestly—"oh, repeat me that avowal. Again tell me that you will be the devoted of your Matilda, in *all* things--Gerald, swear most solemnly to me that you will--my every hope of happiness depends upon it."

How could he refuse, to such pleader, the repetition of his spontaneous vow? Already were his lips opened to swear, before high Heaven, that, in all things earthly, he would obey her will, when he was interrupted by a well known voice, hastily exclaiming:

"Who a debbel dat dare?"

Scarcely had these words been uttered, when they were followed apparently by a blow, then a bound, and then the falling of a human body upon the deck. Gently disengaging his companion, who had clung to him with an air of alarm, Gerald turned to discover the cause of the interruption. To his surprise, he beheld Sambo, whose post of duty was at the helm, lying extended on the deck, while, at the same moment, a sudden plunge was heard, as of a heavy body falling overboard. The first impulse of the officer was to seize the helm, with a view to right the vessel, already swerving from her course; the second, to awaken the crew, who were buried in sleep on the forecastle. These, with the habitual promptitude of their nature, speedily obeyed his call, and a light being brought, Gerald, confiding the helm to one of his best men, proceeded to examine the condition of Sambo.

It was evident that the aged negro had been stunned, but *whether seriously* injured, it was impossible to decide. No

external wound was visible, and yet his breathing was that of one who had received some severe bodily harm. In a few minutes, however, he recovered his recollection, and the words he uttered, as he gazed wildly around, and addressed his master, were sufficient to explain the whole affair:

"Damn him debbel, Massa Geral, he get safe off, him billain."

"Ha, Desborough! it is then so? Quick, put the helm about —two of the lightest and most active into my canoe, and follow in pursuit. The fellow is making for the shore, no doubt. Now then, my lads," as two of the crew sprang into the canoe that had been instantly lowered, "fifty dollars between you, recollect, if you bring him back."

Although there needed no greater spur to exertion, than a desire both to please their officer, and to acquit themselves of a duty, the sum offered was not without its due weight. In an instant, the canoe was seen scuddling along the surface of the water, towards the shore, and, at intervals, as the anxious Gerald listened, he fancied he could distinguish the exertions of the fugitive swimmer from those made by the paddles of his pursuers. For a time all was silent, when, at length, a deriding laugh came over the surface of the lake, that too plainly told, the settler had reached the shore, and was beyond all chance of capture. In the bitterness of his disappointment, and heedless of the pleasure his change of purpose had procured him, Gerald could not help cursing his folly, in having suffered himself to be diverted from his original intention of descending to the prisoner's place of confinement. Had this been done, all might have been well. He had now no doubt that the voices had proceeded from thence, and he was resolved, as soon as the absent men came on board, to institute a strict inquiry into the affair.

No sooner, therefore, had the canoe returned, than all hands were summoned and questioned, under a threat of severe punishment, to whoever should be found prevaricating as to the manner of the prisoner's escape. Each positively de-

nied having in any way violated the order which enjoined that no communication should take place between the prisoner and the crew, to whom indeed all access was denied, with the exception of Sambo, entrusted with the duty of carrying the former his meals. The denial of the men was so straight forward and clear, that Gerald knew not what to believe, and yet it was evident that the sounds he had heard, proceeded from human voices. Determined to satisfy himself, his first care was to descend between the decks, preceded by his boatswain, with a lantern. At the sternmost extremity of the little vessel there was a small room, used for stores, but which, empty on this trip, had been converted into a cell for Desborough. This was usually entered from the cabin; but in order to avoid inconvenience to the ladies, a door had been effected in the bulk heads, the key of which was kept by Sambo. On inspection, this door was found hermetically closed, so that it became evident, if the key had not been purloined from its keeper, the escape of Desborough must have been accomplished through the cabin. Moreover, there was no opening of any description to be found, through which a knife might be passed to enable him to sever the bonds which confined his feet. Close to the partition, were swung the hammocks of two men, who had been somewhat dilatory in obeying the summons on deck, and between whom it was not impossible the conversation, which Gerald had detected, had been carried on. On re-ascending, he again questioned these men, but they most solemnly assured him they had not spoken either together or to others, within the last two hours, having fallen fast asleep on being relieved from their watch. Search was now made in the pockets of Sambo, whose injury had been found to be a violent blow given on the back of the head, and whose recovery from stupefaction was yet imperfect. The key being found, all suspicion of participation was removed from the crew, who *could have only* communicated from their own quarter of the *vessel, and they* were accordingly dismissed; one half, com-

prising the first watch, to their hammocks, the remainder to their original station on the forecastle. The next care of the young Commander was to inspect the cabin, and institute a strict scrutiny as to the manner in which the escape had been effected. The door that opened into the prison, stood between the companion ladder and the recess occupied by the daughters of the Governor. To his surprise, Gerald found it locked, and the key that usually remained in a niche near the door, removed. On turning to search for it, he also noticed, for the first time, that the lamp, suspended from a beam in the centre of the cabin, had been extinguished. Struck by these remarkable circumstances, a suspicion, which he would have given much not to have entertained, forced itself upon his mind. As a first measure, and that there might be no doubt whatever on the subject, he broke open the door. Of course it was untenanted. Upon a small table lay the remains of the settler's last meal, but neither knife nor fork, both which articles had been interdicted, were to be found. At the foot of the chair on which he had evidently been seated for the purpose of freeing himself, lay the heavy cords that had bound his ancles. These had been severed in two places, and, as was discovered on close examination, by the application of some sharp and delicate cutting instrument. No where, however, was this visible. It was evident to Gerald that assistance had been afforded from some one within the cabin, and who that some one was, he scarcely doubted. With this impression fully formed, he re-entered from the prison, and standing near the curtained berth occupied by the daughters of the Governor, questioned as to whether they were aware that his prisoner Desborough had escaped. Both expressed surprise in so natural a manner, that Gerald knew not what to think; but when they added that they had not heard the slightest noise—nor had spoken themselves, nor heard others speak, professing moreover ignorance that the lamp even had been extinguished, he felt suspicion converted into certainty.

It was impossible, he conceived, that a door, which stood only two paces from the bed, could be locked and unlocked without their hearing it—neither was it probable that Desborough would have thought of thus needlessly securing the place of his late detention. Such an idea might occur to the aider, but not to the fugitive himself, to whom every moment must be of the highest importance. Who then could have assisted him? Not Major Montgomerie, for he slept in the after part of the cabin—not Miss Montgomerie, for she was upon deck—moreover, had not one of those, he had so much reason to suspect, interceded for the fellow only on the preceding day.

Such was the reasoning of Gerald, as he passed rapidly in review the several probabilities—but, although annoyed beyond measure at the escape of the villain, and incapable of believing other than that the daughters of the Governor had connived at it, his was too gallant a nature to make such a charge, even by implication, against them. He was aware of the strong spirit of nationality existing every where among citizens of the United States, and he had no doubt, that in liberating their countryman, they had acted under an erroneous impression of duty. Although extremely angry, he made no comment whatever on the subject, but contenting himself with wishing his charge a less than usually cordial good night, left them to their repose, and once more quitted the cabin.

During the whole of this examination, Miss Montgomerie had continued on deck. Gerald found her leaning over the gangway, at which he had left her, gazing intently on the water, through which the schooner was now gliding at an increased rate. From the moment of his being compelled to quit her side, to inquire into the cause of Sambo's exclamation and rapidly succeeding fall, he had not had an opportunity of again approaching her. Feeling that some apology was due, he hastened to make one; but, vexed and irritated as he was at the escape of the settler, his disappointment

imparted to his manner a degree of restraint, and there was less of ardor in his address than he had latterly been in the habit of exhibiting. Miss Montgomerie remarked it, and sighed.

"I have been reflecting," she said, "on the little dependance that is to be placed upon the most flattering illusions of human existence—and here are you come to afford me a painful and veritable illustration of my theory."

"How, dearest Matilda! what mean you?" asked the officer, again warmed into tenderness by the presence of the fascinating being.

"Can you ask, Gerald?" and her voice assumed a tone of melancholy reproach—"recal but your manner—your language—your devotedness of soul, not an hour since—compare these with your present coldness, and then wonder that I should have reason for regret."

"Nay, Matilda, that coldness arose not from any change in my feelings towards yourself—I was piqued, disappointed, even angry, at the extraordinary escape of my prisoner, and could not sufficiently play the hypocrite to disguise my annoyance."

"Yet, what had I to do with the man's escape, that his offence should be visited upon me?" she demanded, quickly.

"Can you not find some excuse for my vexation, knowing, as you do that the wretch was a vile assassin—a man whose hands have been imbrued in the blood of my own father?"

"Was he not acquitted of the charge?"

"He was—but only from lack of evidence to convict; yet, although acquitted by the law, not surer is fate than that he is an assassin."

"You hold assassins in great horror," remarked the American, thoughtfully—"you are right—it is but natural."

"In horror, said you?—aye, in such loathing, that language can supply no term to express it."

"And yet, you once attempted an assassination yourself.

Nay, do not start, and look the image of astonishment. Have you not told me that you fired into the hut, on the night of your mysterious adventure? What right had you, if we argue the question on its real merit, to attempt the life of a being who had never injured you?"

"What right, Matilda?—every right, human and divine. I sought but to save a victim from the hands of a midnight murderer.

"And, to effect this, scrupled not to become a midnight murderer yourself!

"And is it thus you interpret my conduct, Matilda?"—the voice of Gerald spoke bitter reproach—"can you compare the act of that man with mine, and hold me no more blameless than him?"

"Nay, I did not say I blamed you," she returned, gaily—"but the fact is, you had left me so long to ruminate here alone, that I have fallen into a mood argumentative, or philosophical—whichsoever you may be pleased to term it—and I am willing to maintain my position, that you might, by possibility, have been more guilty than the culprit at whom you aimed, had your shot destroyed him.

The light tone in which Matilda spoke dispelled the seriousness which had begun to shadow the brow of the young Commander—"And pray how do you make this good?" he asked.

"Suppose for instance, the slumberer you preserved had been a being of crime, through whom the hopes, the happiness, the peace of mind, and above all, the fair fame of the other been cruelly and irrevocably blasted. Let us imagine that he had destroyed some dear friend or relative of him with whose vengeance you beheld him threatened."

"Could that be——."

"Or," interrupted the American, in the same careless tone "that he had betrayed a wife."

"*Such* a man——"

"Or, what is worse, infinitely worse, sought to put the finishing stroke to his villainy, by affixing to the name and conduct of his victim every ignominy and disgrace which can attach to insulted humanity."

"Matilda," eagerly exclaimed the youth, advancing close to her, and gazing into her dark eyes; "you are drawing a picture."

"No Gerald," she replied calmly, "I am merely supposing a case. Could you find no excuse for a man acting under a sense of so much injury?—would you still call him an assassin, if, with such provocation, he sought to destroy the hated life of one who had thus injured him?"

Gerald paused, apparently bewildered.

"Tell me, dearest Gerald," and her fair and beautiful hand caught and pressed his—"would you still bestow upon one so injured the degrading epithet of assassin?"

"Assassin!—most undoubtedly I would. But why this question, Matilda?"

The features of the American assumed a changed expression; she dropped the hand she had taken the instant before, and said, disappointedly:

"I find, then, my philosophy is totally at fault."

"Wherein, Matilda?" anxiously asked Gerald.

"In this, that I have not been able to make you a convert to my opinions."

"And these are—?" again questioned Gerald, his every pulse throbbing with intense emotion.

"Not to pronounce too harshly on the conduct of others, seeing that we ourselves may stand in much need of lenity of judgment. There might have existed motives for the action of him whom you designate as an assassin, quite as powerful as those which led to *your* interference, and quite as easily justified to himself."

"But, dearest Matilda——"

"Nay, I have done—I close at once my argument and my

philosophy. The humour is past, and I shall no longer attempt to make the worse appear the better cause. I dare say you thought me in earnest," she added, with slight sarcasm, "but a philosophical disquisition between two lovers on the eve of parting for ever, was too novel and piquant a seduction to be resisted."

That "parting for ever" was sufficient to drive all philosophy utterly away from our hero.

"For ever, did you say, Matilda?—no, not for ever; yet, how coldly do you allude to a separation, which, although I trust it will be only temporary, is to me a source of the deepest vexation. You did not manifest this indifference in the early part of our conversation this evening."

"And if there be a change," emphatically yet tenderly returned the beautiful American; "am *I* the only one changed. Is your manner *now* what it was *then*. Do you already forget at *what* a moment that conversation was interrupted?"

Gerald did not forget; and again, as they leaned over the vessel's side, his arm was passed around the waist of his companion.

The hour, the scene, the very rippling of the water—all contributed to lend a character of excitement to the feelings of the youth. Filled with tenderness and admiration for the facinating being who reposed thus confidingly on his shoulder, he scarcely dared to move, lest in so doing he should destroy the fabric of his happiness.

"First watch there, hilloa! rouse up, and be d—d to you, it's two o'clock."

Both Gerald and Matilda, although long and silently watching the progress of the vessel, had forgotten there was any such being as a steersman to direct her.

"Good Heaven, can it be so late?" whispered the American, gliding from her lover; "if my uncle be awake, he *will certainly* chide me for my imprudence. Good night,

dear Gerald," and drawing her cloak more closely around her shoulders, she quickly crossed the deck, and descended to the cabin.

"What the devil's this?" said the relieving steersman, as, rubbing his heavy eyes with one hand, he stooped and raised with the other something from the deck against which he had kicked, in his advance to take the helm; "why, I'm blest if it arn't the apron off old Sally here. Have you been fingering Sall's apron, Bill?"

"Not I, faith," growled the party addressed, I've enough to do to steer the craft without thinking o' meddling with Sall's apron at this time o' night."

"I should like to know who it is that has hexposed the old gal to the night hair in this here manner," still muttered the other, holding up the object in question to his closer scrutiny; "it was only this morning I gave her a pair of bran new apron strings, and helped to dress her myself. If she doesn't hang fire after this, I'm a Dutchman that's all."

"What signifies jawing, Tom Fluke. I suppose she got unkivered in the scurry after the Yankee; but bear a hand, and kiver her, unless you wish a fellow to stay here all night."

Old Sal, our readers must know, was no other than the long twenty-four pounder, formerly belonging to Gerald's gun-boat, which, now removed to his new command, lay a mid ships, and mounted on a pivot, constituted the whole battery of the schooner. The apron was the leaden covering protecting the touch-hole, which, having unaccountably fallen off, had encountered the heavy foot of Tom Fluke, in his advance along the deck.

The apron was at length replaced. Tom Fluke took the helm, and his companion departed, as he said, to have a comfortable snooze.

Gerald, who had been an amused listener of the preceding dialogue, soon followed, first inquiring into the condition of

his faithful Sambo, who, on examination, was found to have been stunned by the violence of the blow he had received. This, Gerald doubted not, had been given with the view of better facilitating Desborough's escape, by throwing the schooner out of her course, and occasioning a consequent confusion among the crew, which might have the effect of distracting their attention, for a time, from himself.

CHAPTER II.

THE following evening, an armed schooner was lying at anchor in the roadstead of Buffalo, at the southern extremity of Lake Erie, and within a mile of the American shore. It was past midnight—and although the lake was calm and unbroken as the face of a mirror, a dense fog had arisen which prevented objects at the head of the vessel from being seen from the stern. Two men only were visible upon the after deck; the one lay reclining upon an arm chest, muffled up in a dread-nought pea jacket, the other paced up and down hurriedly, and with an air of deep pre-occupation. At intervals he would stop and lean over the gang-way, apparently endeavouring to pierce through the fog and catch a glimpse of the adjacent shore, and, on these occasions, a profound sigh would burst from his chest. Then again he would resume his rapid walk, with the air of one who has resolved to conquer a weakness, and substitute determination in its stead. Altogether his manner was that of a man ill at ease from his own thoughts.

"Sambo," he at length exclaimed, addressing the man in the pea jacket for the first time, "I shall retire to my cabin, but fail not to call me an hour before day-break. Our friends being all landed, there can be nothing further to detain us here, we will therefore make the best of our way back to Amherstburg in the morning."

"Yes, Massa Geral," returned the negro, yawning and half raising his brawny form from his rude couch with one hand, while he rubbed his heavy eyes with the knuckles of the other.

"How is your head tonight?" inquired the officer in a kind tone.

"Berry well, Massa Geral—but berry sleepy."

"Then sleep, Sambo; but do not fail to awaken me in time: we shall weigh anchor the very first thing in the morning, provided the fog does not continue. By the bye, you superintended the landing of the baggage—was every thing sent ashore?"

"All, Massa Geral, I see him all pack in e wagon, for e Bubbalo town—all, except dis here I find in Miss Mungummery cabin under e pillow."

As he spoke, the negro quitted his half recumbent position, and drew from his breast a small clasped pocket book, on a steel entablature adorning the cover of which, were the initials of the young lady just named.

"How is it Sambo, that you had not sooner spoken of this? The pocket book contains papers that may be of importance; and yet there is now no means of forwarding it, unless I delay the schooner."

"I only find him hab an hour ago, Massa Geral, when I go to make e beds and put e cabin to rights," said the old man, in a tone that showed he felt, and was pained by the reproof of his young master. "Dis here too," producing a small ivory handled penknife, "I find same time in e Gubbanor's dater's bed."

Gerald extended his hand to receive it. "A penknife in the bed of the Governor's daughters!" he repeated with surprise. Ruminating a moment he added to himself, "By heaven, it must be so—it is then as I expected. Would that I had had this proof of their participation before they quitted the schooner. Very well, Sambo, no blame can attach to you—go to sleep, my good fellow, but not beyond the time I have given you."

"Tankee, Massa Geral," and drawing the collar of his pea *jacket* close under his ears, the negro again extended himself *at his length* upon the arm chest.

The first idea of the young Commander on descending to the cabin, was to examine the blade of the penknife. Passing it over his finger, he perceived that the edge had that particular bluntness which would have been produced by cutting through a rope, and on closer examination he found it full of numerous fine notches, apparently the result of the resistance it had met with. His next care was to examine the severed portions of the rope itself, and in these he could observe, by the reflection of the lamp, near which he held them minute particles of steel, which left no doubt in his mind that this had been the instrument by which the separation of Desborough's bonds had been effected. We will not venture to assert what were the actual feelings of the officer, on making this discovery ; but it may be supposed, that, added to the great annoyance he felt at the escape of the settler, his esteem for those who had so positively denied all knowledge of, or participation in, the evasion was sensibly diminished ; and yet it was not without pain that he came to a conclusion of the unworthiness of those whom he had known from boyhood, and loved no less than he had known.

In the fulness of his indignation at their duplicity, he now came to the resolution of staying the departure of the schooner, yet a few hours, that he might have an opportunity of going ashore himself, presenting this undoubted evidence of their guilt, and taxing them boldly with the purpose to which it had been appropriated. Perhaps there was another secret motive which induced this determination, and that was, the opportunity it would afford him of again seeing his beloved Matilda, and delivering her pocket book with his own hand.

This resolution taken, without deeming it necessary to countermand his order to Sambo, he placed the knife in a pocket in the breast of his uniform, where he had already deposited the souvenir ; and having retired to his own cabin, was about to undress himself, when he fancied he could distinguish, through one of the stern windows of the schooner, sounds *similar to those of* muffled oars. While he yet lis-

tened breathlessly to satisfy himself whether he had not been deceived, a dark form came hurriedly, yet noiselessly, down the steps of the cabin. Gerald turned, and discovered Sambo, who now perfectly awake, indicated by his manner, he was the bearer of some alarming intelligence. His report confirmed the suspicion already entertained by himself, and at that moment he fancied he heard the same subdued sounds but multiplied in several distinct points. A vague sense of danger came over the mind of the officer, and although his crew consisted of a mere handful of men, he at once resolved to defend himself to the last, against whatever force might be led to the attack. While Sambo hastened to arouse the men, he girded his cutlass and pistols around his loins, and taking down two huge blunderbusses from a beam in the ceiling of the cabin, loaded them heavily with musket balls. Thus armed he sprang once more upon deck.

The alarm was soon given, and the preparation became general, but neither among the watch, who slumbered in the forecastle, nor those who had turned into their hammocks, was there the slightest indication of confusion. These latter "tumbled up," with no other addition to the shirts in which they had left their cots, then their trousers, a light state of costume to which those who were "boxed up" in their pea jackets and great coats on the forecastle, soon reduced themselves also—not but that the fog admitted of much warmer raiment, but that their activity might be unimpeded—handkerchiefed heads and tucked up sleeves, with the habiliments which we have named, being the most approved fighting dress in the navy.

Meanwhile, although nothing could be distinguished through the fog, the sounds which had originally attracted the notice of the officer and his trusty servant, increased, despite of the caution evidently used, to such a degree as to be now audible to all on board. What most excited the astonishment of the crew, and the suspicion of Gerald, was the exactness of *the course taken* by the advancing boats, in which not the

slightest deviation was perceptible. It was evident that they were guided by some one who had well studied the distance and bearing of the schooner from the shore, and as it was impossible to hope that even the fog would afford them concealment from the approaching enemy, all that was left them was to make the best defence they could. One other alternative remained, it is true, and this was to cut their cable and allow themselves to drop down silently out of the course by which the boats were advancing, but as this step involved the possibility of running ashore on the American coast, when the same danger of captivity would await them, Gerald, after an instant's consideration, rejected the idea, prefering the worthier and more chivalrous dependence on his own and crew's exertions.

From the moment of the general arming, the long gun, which we have already shown to constitute the sole defence of the schooner, was brought nearer to the inshore gang-way, and mounted on its elevated pivot, with its formidable muzzle overtopping and projecting above the low bulwarks, could in an instant be brought to bear on whatever point it might be found advisable to vomit forth its mass of wrath, consisting of grape, cannister, and chain shot. On this gun indeed, the general expectation much depended, for the crew, composed of sixteen men only, exclusive of petty officers, could hope to make but a poor resistance, despite of all the resolution they might bring into the contest, against a squadron of well armed boats, unless some very considerable diminution in the numbers and efforts of these latter should be made by "old Sally," before they actually came to close quarters. The weakness of the crew was in a great degree attributable to the schooner having been employed as a cartel; a fact which must moreover explain the want of caution, on this occasion, on the part of Gerald, whose reputation for vigilance, in all matters of duty, was universally acknowledged. It had not occurred to him that the instant he landed his *prisoners his vessel* ceased to be a cartel, and therefore a fit

subject for the enterprize of his enemies, or the probability is, that in the hour in which he had landed them he would again have weighed anchor, and made the best of his way back to Amherstburg.

"Stand by your gun, men—steady," whispered the officer, as the noise of many oars immediately abreast, and at a distance of not more than twenty yards, announced that the main effort of their enemies was about to be made in that quarter. "Depress a little—there you have her—now into them—fire."

Fiz-z-z-z, and a small pyramid of light rose from the breech of the gun, which sufficed, during the moment it lasted, to discover three boats filled with armed men, advancing immediately opposite, while two others could be seen diverging, apparently one towards the quarter, the other towards the bows of the devoted little vessel. The crew bent their gaze eagerly over her side, to witness the havoc they expected to ensue among their enemies. To their surprise and mortification there was no report. The advancing boats gave three deriding cheers.

"D—n my eyes, if I didn't say she would miss fire, from having her breech unkivered last night," shouted the man who held the match, and who was no other than Tom Fluke. "Quick, here, give us a picker."

A picker was handed to him by one, who also held the powder horn for priming.

"Its no use," he pursued, throwing away the wire, and springing to the deck. "She 's a spike in the touch-hole, and the devil himself wouldn't get it out now."

"A spike!—what mean you?" eagerly demanded Gerald.

"It's too true, Mr. Grantham," said the boatswain, who had flown to examine the touch-hole, "there is a great piece of steel in it, and for all the world like a woman's bodkin, or some such sort of thing."

"Ah! it all comes o' that wench that was here on deck *last night,*" muttered the helmsman, who had succeeded Sam-

bo on duty the preceding night. "I thought I see her fiddlin' about the gun, when the chase was made after the Yankee, although I didn't think to say nothing about it, when you axed Tom Fluke about Sal's apron."

Whatever conjecture might have arisen with others, there was no time to think of, much less to discuss it—the boats were already within a few yards of the vessel.

"Steady, men—silence," commanded Gerald in a low tone: "Since Sal has failed us, we must depend upon ourselves. Down beneath the bulwarks, and move not one of you until they begin to board—then let each man single his enemy and fire; the cutlass must do the rest."

The order was obeyed. Each moment brought the crisis of action nearer: the rowers had discontinued their oars, but the bows of the several boats could be heard obeying the impetus already given them, and dividing the water close to the vessel.

"Now then, Sambo," whispered the officer. At that moment a torch was raised high over the head of the negro and his master. Its rays fell upon the first of the three boats, the crews of which were seen standing up with arms outstretched to grapple with the schooner. Another instant and they would have touched. The negro dropped his light.

Gerald pulled the trigger of his blunderbuss, aimed into the very centre of the boat. Shrieks, curses and plashings, as of bodies falling in the water succeeded; and in the confusion occasioned by the murderous fire, the first boat evidently fell off.

"Again, Sambo," whispered the officer. A second time the torch streamed suddenly in air, and the contents of the yet undischarged blunderbuss spread confusion, dismay and death, into the second boat.

"Old Sal herself couldn't have done better: pity he hadn't a hundred of them," growled Tom Fluke, who although concealed behind the bulwarks, had availed himself of

a crevice near him, to watch the effect produced by the formidable weapons.

There was a momentary indecision among the enemy, after the second destructive fire; it was but momentary. Again they advanced, and closing with the vessel, evinced a determination of purpose, that left little doubt as to the result. A few sprang into the chains and rigging, while others sought to enter by her bows, but the main effort seemed to be made at her gangway, at which Gerald had stationed himself with ten of his best men, the rest being detached to make the best defence they could, against those who sought to enter in the manner above described.

Notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers, the little crew of the schooner had for some time a considerable advantage over their enemies. At the first onset of these latter, their pistols had been discharged, but in so random a manner as to have done no injury—whereas the assailed, scrupulously obeying the order of their Commander, fired not a shot until they found themselves face to face with an enemy; the consequence of which was, that every pistol ball killed an American, or otherwise placed him *hors de combat*. Still, in despite of their loss, the latter were more than adequate to the capture, unless a miracle should interpose to prevent it, and exasperated as they were by the fall of their comrades, their efforts became at each moment more resolute and successful. A deadly contest had been maintained in the gangway, from which, however, Gerald was compelled to retire, although bravely supported by his handful of followers. Step by step he had retreated, until at length he found his back against the main-mast, and his enemies pressing him on every side. Five of his men lay dead in the space between the gangway and the position he now occupied, and Sambo, who had not quitted his side for an instant, was also senseless at his feet, felled by a tremendous blow from a cutlass upon the head. *His force now consisted* merely of the five men remaining of

his own party, and three of those who had been detached, who, all that were left alive, had been compelled to fall back upon their commander. How long he would have continued the hopeless and desperate struggle, in this manner is doubtful, had not a fresh enemy appeared in his rear. These were the crews of two other boats, who, having boarded without difficulty, now came up to the assistance of their comrades. So completely taken by surprise was Gerald in this quarter, that the first intimation he had of his danger was, in the violent seizure of his sword arm from behind, and a general rush upon, and disarming of the remainder of his followers. On turning to behold his enemy, he saw with concern the triumphant face of Desborough.

"Every dog has his day, I guess," huskily chuckled the settler, as by the glare of several torches which had been suddenly lighted, he was now seen casting looks of savage vengeance, and holding his formidable knife threateningly over the head of the officer whom he had grappled. "I reckon as how I told you it would be Jeremiah Desborough's turn next."

"Silence fellow, loose your hold," shouted one whose authoritative voice and manner, announced him for an officer, apparently the leader of the boarding party.

Awed by the tone in which he was addressed, the settler quitted his grasp, and retired muttering into the crowd behind him.

"I regret much, sir," pursued the American Commander seriously, and turning to Gerald, "that your obstinate defence should have been carried to the length it has. We were given to understand, that ours would not be an easy conquest—yet, little deemed it would have been purchased with the lives of nearly half our force. Still, even while we deplore our loss, have we hearts to estimate the valour of our foe. I cannot give you freedom, since the gift is not at my disposal; but at least I may spare you the pain of surrendering a blade you have so nobly wielded. Retain your sword, sir."

Gerald's was not a nature to remain untouched by such an act of chivalrous courtesy, and he expressed in brief, but pointed terms, his sense of the compliment.

A dozen of the boarders, under the command of a midshipman, now received orders to remain, and bring the prize into Buffalo as soon as day light would permit, and with these were left the killed and wounded of both parties, the latter receiving such attention as the rude experience of their comrades enabled them to afford. Five minutes afterwards Gerald, who had exchanged his trusty cutlass, for the sword he had been so flatteringly permitted to retain, found himself in the leading boat of the little return squadron, and seated at the side of his generous captor. It may be easily imagined what his mortification was at this unexpected reverse, and how bitterly he regretted not having weighed anchor the moment his prisoners had been landed. Regret however, was now unavailing, and dismissing this consideration for a while, he reverted to the strange circumstance of the spiking of his gun, and the mocking cheers, which had burst from the lips of his enemies, on the attempt to discharge it. This reflection drew from him a remark to his companion.

"I think you said," he observed, "that you had been informed, the conquest of the schooner would not be an easy one. Would it be seeking too much to know who was your informant?"

The American officer shook his head. I fear I am not at liberty exactly to name—but thus much I may venture to state, that the person who has so rightly estimated your gallantry, is one not wholly unknown to you.

"This is ambiguous. One question more, were you prepared to expect the failure of the schooner's principal means of defence—her long gun?"

If you recollect the cheer that burst from my fellows, at the moment when the harmless flash was seen ascending, you will require no further elucidation on that head," replied the *American evasively*.

This was sufficient for Gerald. He folded his arms, sank his head upon his chest, and continued to muse deeply. Soon afterwards the boat touched the beach, where many of the citizens were assembled to hear tidings of the enterprize, and congratulate the captors. Thence he was conducted to the neat little inn, which was the only place of public accommodation the small town, or rather village of Buffalo, at that period afforded.

CHAPTER III.

At the termination of the memorable war of the revolution—that war which, on the one hand, severed, and for ever, the ties that bound the Colonies in interest and affection with the parent land, and, on the other, seemed as by way of indemnification, to have rivetted the Canadas in closer love to their adopted Mother—hundreds of families who had remained staunch in their allegiance, quitted the republican soil, to which they had been unwillingly transferred, and hastened to close on one side of the vast chain of waters, that separated the descendants of France from the descendants of England, the evening of an existence, whose morning and noon had been passed on the other. Among the number of these was Major Grantham, who, at the close of the revolution, had espoused a daughter, (the only remaining child,) of Frederick and Madeline De Haldimar, whose many vicissitudes of suffering, prior to their marriage, have been fully detailed in Wacousta. When, at that period, the different garrisons on the frontier were given up to the American troops, the several British regiments crossed over into Canada, and, after a short term of service in that country, were successively relieved by fresh corps from England. One of the earliest recalled of these, was the regiment of Colonel Frederick De Haldimar. Local interests, however, attaching his son-in-law to Upper Canada, the latter had, on the reduction of his corps, (a provincial regiment, well known throughout the war of the revolution, for its strength, activity, and good service,) finally fixed himself at Amherstburgh. In the neighbourhood of this post he had acquired extensive possessions, *and, almost from* the first formation of the settlement, ex-

changed the duties of a military, for those of a scarcely less active magisterial, life. Austere in manner, severe in his administration of justice, Major Grantham might have been considered a harsh man, had not these qualities been tempered by his well known benevolence to the poor, and his staunch, yet, unostentatious, support of the deserving and the well intentioned. And, as his life was a continuous illustration of the principles he inculcated, no one could be unjust enough to ascribe to intolerance or oppression, the rigour with which he exacted obedience, to those laws which he so well obeyed himself. It was remarked, moreover, that, while his general bearing to those who sought to place themselves in the scale of arrogant superiority, was proud and unconciliating, his demeanour to his inferiors, was ever that of one sensible that condescension may soothe and gratify the humble spirit, without its exercise at all detracting from the independence of him who offers it. But we cannot better sum up his general excellence, and the high estimation in which he was held in the town of his adoption, than by stating that, at the period of his demise, there was not to be seen one tearless eye among the congregated poor, who with religious respect, flocked to tender the last duties of humanity to the remains of their benefactor and friend.

In the domestic relations of life, Major Grantham was no less exemplary, although perhaps his rigid notions of right, had obtained for him more of the respect than of the love of those who came within their influence, and yet no mean portion of both. Tenderly attached to his wife, whom he had lost when Gerald was yet in his twelfth year, he had not ceased to deplore her loss; and this perhaps had contributed to nourish a reservedness of disposition, which, without at all aiming at, or purposing, such effect, insensibly tended to the production of a corresponding reserve on the part of his children, that increased with their years. Indeed, on their mother, all the tenderness of their young hearts had been lavished, and, when they suddenly saw themselves deprived

of her who loved, and had been loved by them, with doting fondness, they felt as if a void had been left in their affections, which, the less tender evidences of paternal love, were but insufficient wholly to supply. Still, (although not to the same extent,) did they love their father also; and what was wanted in intensity of feeling, was more than made up by the deep, the exalted respect, they entertained for his principles and conduct. It was with pride they beheld him, not merely the deservedly idolized of the low, but the respected of the high —the example of one class, and the revered of another; one whose high position in the social scale, had been attained, less by his striking exterior advantages, than the inward worth that governed every action of his life, and whose moral character, as completely *sans tâche* as his fulfilment of the social duties was proverbially *sans reproche*, could not fail, in a certain degree, to reflect the respect it commanded upon themselves.

As we have before observed, however, all the fervor of their affection had been centered in their mother, and that was indeed a melancholy night in which the youths had been summoned to watch the passing away of her gentle spirit for ever from their love. Isabella De Haldimar had, from her earliest infancy, been remarkable for her quiet and contemplative character; and, bred amid scenes that brought at every retrospect, recollections of some acted horror, it is not surprising that the bias given by nature, should have been developed and strengthened by the events that had surrounded her. Not dissimilar in disposition, as she was not unlike in form, to her mother, she was by that mother carefully endowed with those gentler attributes of goodness, which, taking root within a soil so eminently disposed to their reception, could not fail to render her in after life a model of excellence, both as a mother and a wife. Notwithstanding, however, this moulding of her pliant, and well directed mind, there was about her a melan*choly, which* while it gave promise of the devoted affection of *the mother,* offered but little prospect of cheerfulness, in an

union with one, who, reserved himself, could not be expected to temper that melancholy, by the introduction of a gaiety that was not natural to him. And yet it was for this very melancholy, tender and fascinating in her, that Major Grantham had sought the hand of Isabella De Haldimar; and it was for the very austerity and reserve of his general manner, more than from the manly beauty of his tall dark person, that he too, had become the object of her secret choice, long before he had proposed for her. Keenly alive to the happiness of her daughter, Mrs. De Haldimar had feared that such union was ill assorted, for, as she called to mind the manner and character of her unfortunate uncle, it seemed to her there were points of resemblance between him and the proposed husband of her child, which augured ill for the future quiet of Isabella; but, when she consulted her on the subject, and found that every feeling of her heart, that was not claimed by her fond and indulgent parents, was given to Major Grantham, she no longer hesitated, and the marriage took place. Contrary to the expectation, and much to the delight of Mrs. De Haldimar, the first year of the union proved one of complete and unalloyed happiness, and she saw with pleasure, that if Major Grantham did not descend to those little *empressemens* which mark the doting lover, he was never deficient in those manlier, and more respectful attentions, that by a woman of the mild and reflecting disposition of Isabella, were so likely to be appreciated. More than the first year, however, it was not permitted Mrs. De Haldimar to witness her daughter's happiness. Her husband's regiment having been ordered home; but, in the past, she had a sufficient guarantee for the future, and, when she parted from Isabella, it was under the full conviction, that she had confided her to a man in every way sensible of her worth, and desirous of making her happy.

So far the event justified her expectation. The austerity which Major Grantham carried with him into public life, was, *if not wholly laid aside*, at least considerably softened, in the

presence of his wife, and when, later, the births of two sons crowned their union, there was nothing left her to desire, which it was in the power of circumstances to bestow. But Mrs. De Haldimar had not taken into account the effect likely to be produced by a separation from herself—the final severing, as it were, of every tie of blood. Of the four children who had composed the family of Colonel Frederick De Haldimar, the two oldest, (officers in his own corps,) had perished in the war; the fourth, a daughter, had died young, of a decline; and the loss of the former especially, who had grown up with her from childhood to youth, was deeply felt by the sensitive Isabella. With the dreadful scenes perpetrated at Detroit—scenes in which their family had been the principal sufferers—the boys had been familiarized by the old soldiers of their father's regiment, who often took them to the several points most worthy of remark, from the incidents connected with them; and, pointing out the spots on which their uncle Charles and their aunt Clara had fallen victims to the terrible hatred of Wacousta, for their grandfather, detailed the horrors of those days with a rude fidelity of coloring, that brought dismay and indignation to the hearts of their wondering and youthful auditors. On these occasions, Isabella became the depository of all that they had gleaned. To her they confided, under the same pledge of secrecy which had been exacted from themselves, every circumstance of horror connected with those days; nor were they satisfied until they had shewn her those scenes with which so many dreadful recollections were associated. On one naturally of a melancholy temperament, these oft recurring visits could not fail to produce a deep effect; and insensibly that gloom of disposition, which might have yielded to the influence of years and circumstances, was more and more confirmed by the darkness of the imagery on which it reposed. Had she been permitted to disclose to her kind mother all *that she* had heard and known on the subject, the reciprocation *of their* sympathies might have relieved her heart, and

partially dissipated the phantasms that her knowledge of those events had conjured up; but this her brothers had positively prohibited, alleging, as powerful reasons, not merely that the men who had confided in their promise, would be severely taken to task by their father, but also that it could only tend to grieve their mother unnecessarily, and to re-open wounds that were nearly closed.

Thus was the melancholy of Isabella fed by the very silence in which she was compelled to indulge. Often was her pillow wetted with tears, as she passed in review the several fearful incidents connected with the tale in which her brothers had so deeply interested her, and she would have given worlds at those moments, had they been hers to bestow, to recal to life and animation, the beloved but unfortunate uncle and aunt, to whose fate, her brothers assured her, even their veteran friends never alluded without sorrow. Often, too, did she dwell on the share her own fond mother had borne in those transactions, and the anguish which must have pierced her heart, when first apprized of the loss of her, whom, she had even *then* loved with all a mother's love. Nay, more than once, while gazing on the face of the former, her inmost soul given up to the recollection of all she had endured, first at Michillimackinac, and afterwards at Detroit, had she unconsciously suffered the tears to course down her cheeks without an effort to restrain them. Ignorant of the cause, Mrs. De Haldimar only ascribed this emotion to the natural melancholy of her daughter's character, and then she would gently chide her, and seek, by a variety of means, to divert her thoughts into some lively channel; but she had little success in the attempt to eradicate reflections already rooted in so congenial a soil.

Her sister died very young, and she scarcely felt her loss; but, when, subsequently, the vicissitudes of a military life had deprived her for ever of her beloved brothers, her melancholy increased. It was, however, the silent, tearless melancholy, *that knows not* the paroxysm of outrageous grief. The

quiet resignation of her character formed an obstacle to the inroads of all vivacious sorrow; yet was her health not the less effectually undermined by the slow action of her innate feeling, unfortunately too much fostered by outward influences. By her marriage and the birth of her sons, whom she loved with all a mother's fondness, her mental malady had been materially diminished, and indeed, in a great degree superseded, but, unhappily previous to these events, it had seriously affected her constitution, and produced a morbid susceptibility of mind and person, that exposed her to be overwhelmed by the occurrence of any of those afflictions which, otherwise, she might, with ordinary fortitude, have endured. When, therefore, intelligence from England announced that her parents had both perished in a hurricane on their route to the West Indies, whither the regiment of Colonel De Haldimar had been ordered, the shock was too great for her, mentally and personally enfeebled as she had been, to sustain, and she sank gradually under this final infliction of Providence.

Major Grantham beheld with dismay the effect of this blow upon his beloved wife. Fell consumption had now marked her for his own, and so rapid was the progress of the disease acting on a temperament already too much pre-disposed to its influence, that, in despite of all human preventives, the sensitive Isabella, before six months had elapsed, was summoned to a better world.

And never did human being meet the summons with more perfect resignation to the Divine will. The death-bed scene between that tender mother and her sorrowing family, was one which might have edified even the most pious. Gerald, as we have already said, was in his twelfth year at the period of this afflicting event—his brother Henry, one year younger; both were summoned from school on the morning of her death—both knew that their fond mother was ill—but so *far were they* from imagining the scene about to be offered to *their young* observation, that when they reached home it was

with the joyous feeling of boys, exulting in a momentary liberation from scholastic restraint, and eagerly turning into holiday, that which they little deemed would so soon become a day of mourning. How rapidly was the deceitful illusion dispelled, when, on entering the sick chamber of their adored parent, they beheld what every surrounding circumstance told them was not the mere bed of sickness, but the bed of death. Propped on pillows that supported her feeble head—her beautiful black hair streaming across her pallid, placid brow, and her countenance wearing a holy and religious calm, Mrs. Grantham presented an image of resignation, so perfect, so superhuman, that the disposition to a violent ebullition of grief, which at first manifested itself in the youths, gave place to a certain mysterious awe, that chained them almost spell-bound at the foot of her bed. A strict observer of the ordinances of her religion, she had had every preparation made for her reception of the sacrament, the administering of which was only deferred until the arrival of her children. This duty being now performed, with the imposing solemnity befitting the occasion, the venerable clergyman, who had known and loved her from her infancy, imprinted a last kiss upon her brow, and left the apartment deeply affected. Then, indeed, for the first time, was a loose given to the grief that pervaded every bosom, even to the lowest of the domestics, who had been summoned to receive her parting blessing. Close to the bed-side, each pressing one of her emaciated hands to his lips, knelt her heart-broken sons, weeping bitterly, while, from the chest of a tall negro, apparently an old and attached servant, burst forth at intervals convulsive sobs. Even the austere Major Grantham, seated at some little distance from the bed, contemplating the serene features of his dying wife, could not restrain the tears that forced themselves forth, and trickled through his fingers, as he half sought to conceal his emotion from his servants. In the midst of the profound sorrow which environed her, Mrs. Grantham alone was *unappalled* by her approaching end: she spoke

calmly and collectedly, gently chiding some and encouraging others; giving advice, and conveying orders, as if she was merely about to undertake a short customary journey instead of that long, and untravelled one, whence there is neither communication nor return. To her unhappy sons she gave it in tender injunction to recompense their father by their love for the loss he was about to sustain in herself; and to her servants she enjoined to be at once dutiful to their master and affectionate to her children. Having made her peace with God, and disposed, of herself, her consideration, was now exclusively for others—and, during the hour which intervened between the departure of the clergyman and her death, the whole tenor of her thoughts was directed to the alleviation of the sorrow which she felt would succeed the flight of her spirit from earth. As she grew fainter, she motioned to her husband to come near her—He did so, and, with a smile of rapt serenity that bespoke the conviction strong at her heart, she said in a low tone, as she clasped his warm hand within her own, already stiffening with the chill of death: "Grieve not, I entreat you, for recollect that, although we part, it is not for ever. Oh, no! my father, my mother, my brothers, and you my husband, and beloved children, we shall all meet again." Exhausted with the energy she had thrown into these last words, she sank back upon the pillow, from which she had partially raised her head. After a short pause, she glanced her eye on a portrait that hung on the opposite wall. It represented an officer habited in the full uniform of her father's regiment. She next looked at the negro, who, amid his unchecked sorrow, had been an attentive observer of her every action, and pointed expressively first to her kneeling children, and then to the portrait. The black seemed to understand her meaning; for he made a sign of acquiescence. She then extended her hand to him, which he kissed, and bedewed with his tears, and retreated sobbing to his position near the *foot of the bed*. Two minutes afterwards, Mrs. Grantham

had breathed her last, but so insensibly that, although every eye was fixed upon her, no one could tell the precise moment at which she had ceased to exist.

We will pass over the deep grief which preyed upon the hearts of the unfortunate brothers, for weeks after they had been compelled to acknowledge the stern truth that they were indeed motherless. Those who have, at that tender age, known what it is to lose an affectionate mother, and under circumstances at all similar to those just described, will be at no loss to comprehend the utter desolation of their bruised spirits: to those who have not sustained this most grievous of human afflictions, it would be a waste of time to detail what cannot possibly be understood, save through the soul-withering ordeal of a like experience.

If, in early youth, however, the impressions of sorrow are more lively, so is the return to hope more rapid. Time, and the elasticity of spirit common to their years, gradually dissipated the cloud of melancholy that had rested on the hearts of the Canadian Brothers; and, although they never ceased to lament their mother with that tenderness and respect which her many virtues, and love for them especially, demanded, still did their thoughts gradually take the bias to which a variety of outward and important circumstances afterwards directed them. It was soon after this event, that the first seeds of disunion began to spring up between England and the United States, the inevitable results of which, it was anticipated, would be the involving of Canada in the struggle; and, notwithstanding the explosion did not take place for several years afterwards, preparations were made on either shore, to an extent that kept the spirit of enterprise constantly on the alert.

Inheriting the martial spirit of their family, the inclinations of the young Granthams led them to the service; and, as their father could have no reasonable objection to oppose to a choice which promised not merely to secure his sons in an eligible profession, but to render them in some degree

of benefit to their country, he consented to their views. Gerald's preference leading him to the navy, he was placed on that establishment as a midshipman; while Henry, several years later, obtained, through the influence of their father's old friend General Brock, an Ensigncy in the —— Regiment then quartered at Amherstburg.

Meanwhile, Major Grantham, whose reserve appeared to have increased since the death of his wife, seemed to seek, in the active discharge of his magisterial duties, a relief from the recollection of the loss he had sustained; and it was about this period that, in consequence of many of the American settlers in Canada, having, in anticipation of a rupture between the two countries, secretly withdrawn themselves to the opposite shore, his exaction of the duties of British subjects from those who remained, became more vigorous than ever.

We have already shewn Desborough to have been the most unruly and disorderly of the worthless set; and as no opportunity was omitted of compelling him to renew his oath of allegiance, (while his general conduct was strictly watched,) the hatred of the man for the stern magistrate was daily matured, until at length it grew into an inextinguishable desire for revenge.

The chief, and almost only recreation, in which Major Grantham indulged, was that of fowling. An excellent shot himself, he had been in some degree the instructor of his sons; and, although, owing to the wooded nature of the country, the facilities afforded to the enjoyment of his favorite pursuit in the orthodox manner of a true English sportsman, were few, still, as game was every where abundant, he had continued to turn to account the advantages that were actually offered. Both Gerald and Henry had been his earlier companions in the sport, but, of late years and especially since the death of their mother, he had been in the habit of going out alone.

It was one morning in that season of the year when the *migratory pigeons* pursue their course towards what are

termed the "burnt woods," on which they feed, and in such numbers as to cover the surface of the heavens, as with a dense and darkening cloud, that Major Grantham sallied forth at early dawn, with his favorite dog and gun, and, as was his custom, towards Hartley's point. Disdaining, as unworthy of his skill, the myriads of pigeons that every where presented themselves, he passed from the skirt of the forest towards an extensive swamp, in the rear of Hartley's, which, abounding in golden plover and snipe, usually afforded him a plentiful supply. On this occasion he was singularly successful, and, having bagged as many birds as he could conveniently carry, was in the act of ramming down his last charge, when the report of a shot came unexpectedly from the forest. In the next instant he was sensible he was wounded, and, placing his hand to his back, felt it wet with blood. As there was at the moment several large wild ducks within a few yards of the spot where he stood, and between himself and the person who had fired, he at once concluded that he had been the victim of an accident, and, feeling the necessity of assistance, he called loudly on the unseen sportsman, to come forward to his aid; but, although his demand was several times repeated, no answer was returned, and no one appeared. With some difficulty he contrived, after disembarrassing himself of his game-bag, to reach the farm at Hartley's, where every assistance was afforded him, and, a waggon having been procured, he was conducted to his home, when, on examination, the wound was pronounced to be mortal.

On the third day from this event, Major Grantham breathed his last, bequeathing the guardianship of his sons to Colonel D'Egville, who had married his sister. At this epoch, Gerald was absent with his vessel on a cruise, but Henry received his parting blessing upon both, accompanied by a solemn injunction, that they should never be guilty of any act which could sully the memory, either of their mother or himself. This Henry *promised*, in the name of both, most religiously

to observe; and, when Gerald returned, and to his utter dismay beheld the lifeless form of the parent, whom he had quitted only a few days before in all the vigour of health, he not only renewed the pledge given by his brother, but with the vivacity of character habitual to him, called down the vengeane of Heaven upon his head, should he ever be found to swerve from those principles of virtue and honor, which had been so sedulously inculcated on him.

Meanwhile, there was nothing to throw even the faintest light on the actual cause of Major Grantham's death. On the first probing and dressing of the wound, the murderous lead had been extracted, and, as it was discovered to be a rifle ball it was taken for granted that some Indian, engaged in the chase, had, in the eagerness of pursuit, missed an intermediate object at which he had taken aim, and lodged the ball accidentally in the body of the unfortunate gentleman; and that, terrified at the discovery of the mischief he had done, and perhaps apprehending punishment, he had hastily fled from the spot, to avoid detection. This opinion, unanimously entertained by the townspeople, was shared by the brothers, who knowing the unbounded love and respect of all for their parent, dreamt not for one moment that his death could have been the result of premeditation. It was left for Desborough to avow, at a later period, that he had been the murderer; and with what startling effect on him, to whom the admission was exultingly made, we have already seen.

When Desborough was subsequently tried, there was no other evidence by which to establish his guilt, than the admission alluded to, and this he declared, in his defence, he had only made with a view to annoy Mr. Grantham, to whom he owed a grudge for persecuting him so closely on the occasion of his flight with his son; and, although, on reference to the period, it was found that Major Grantham had received the wound which occasioned his death two days after Desborough had been ordered, on pain of instant expulsion from the country, to renew his oaths, and perform service with the militia

of the district, still, as this fact admitted only of a presumptive interpretation the charge could not be sufficiently brought home to him, and he was, however reluctantly, acquitted. The rifles which, it will be remembered, were seized by Henry Grantham on the occasion of his detection of the settler in an act of treason, were still in his possession, and, as they were of a remarkably small calibre, the conviction would have taken place, had the ball which killed Major Grantham been forthcoming, and found to fit either of the bores. Unfortunately, however, it so happened that it had not been preserved, so that an essential link in the chain of circumstances had been irrecoverably lost. When the question was mooted by the court, before whom he was tried, the countenance of the settler was discovered to fall, and there was a restlessness about him, totally at variance with the almost insolent calm he had preserved throughout; but when it appeared that, from the impression previously entertained of the manner of the death, it had not been thought necessary to preserve the ball, he again resumed his confidence, and listened to the remainder of the proceedings unmoved.

We have seen him subsequently escaping from the confinement to which he had been subjected, with a view to trial for another offence, and, later still, unshackled and exultingly brandishing his knife over the head of one of the objects of his bitterest hatred, on the deck of the very vessel in which he had so recently been a prisoner.

CHAPTER IV.

AUTUMN had passed away, and winter, the stern invigorating winter of Canada, had already covered the earth with enduring snows, and the waters with bridges of seemingly eternal ice, and yet no effort had been made by the Americans to repossess themselves of the country they had so recently lost. The several garrisons of Detroit and Amherstburgh, reposing under the laurels they had so easily won, made holiday of their conquest; and, secure in the distance that separated them from the more populous districts of the Union, seemed to have taken it for granted that they had played their final part in the active operations of the war, and would be suffered to remain in undisturbed possession. But the storm was already brewing in the far distance which, advancing progressively like the waves of the coming tempest, was destined first to shake them in their security, and finally to overwhelm them in its vortex. With the natural enterprize of their character, the Americans had no sooner ascertained the fall of Detroit, than means, slow but certain, were taken for the recovery of a post, with which, their national glory was in no slight degree identified. The country whence they drew their resources for the occasion, were the new states of Ohio and Kentucky, and one who had previously travelled through those immense tracts of forests, where the dwelling of the backwoodsman is met with at long intervals, would have marvelled at the zeal and promptitude with which these adventurous people, abandoning their homes, and disregarding their personal interests, *flocked* to the several rallying points. Armed and accoutred *at their own* expence, with the unerring rifle that provided

them with game, and the faithful hatchet that had brought down the dark forest into ready subjection, their claim upon the public was for the mere sustenance they required on service. It is true that this partial independence of the Government whom they served rather in the character of volunteers, than of conscripts, was in a great measure fatal to their discipline; but in the peculiar warfare of the country, absence of discipline was rather an advantage than a demerit, since when checked, or thrown into confusion, they looked not for a remedy in the resumption of order, but in the exercise each of his own individual exertions, facilitated as he was by his general knowledge of localities, and his confidence in his own personal resources.

But, although new armies were speedily organized—if organized, may be termed those who brought with them into the contest much courage and devotedness, yet, little discipline, the Americans, in this instance, proceeded with a caution that proved their respect for the British garrison, strongly supported as it was by a numerous force of Indians. Within two months after the capitulation of Detroit, a considerable army, Ohioans and Kentuckians, with some regular Infantry, had been pushed forward as with a view to feel their way; but these having been checked by the sudden appearance of a detachment from Amherstburgh, had limited their advance to the Miami River, on the banks of which, and on the ruins of one of the old English forts of Pontiac's days, they had constructed new fortifications, and otherwise strongly entrenched themselves. It was a mistake, however, to imagine that the enemy would be content with establishing himself here. The new fort merely served as a nucleus for the concentration of such resources of men and warlike equipment, as were necessary to the subjection, firstly of Detroit, and afterwards of Amherstburgh. Deprived of the means of transport, the shallow bed of the Miami aiding them but little, it was a matter of no mean difficulty with the Americans to *convey through several* hundred miles of forest, the heavy

guns they required for battering, and as it was only at intervals this could be effected; the most patient endurance and unrelaxing perseverance being necessary to the end. From the inactivity of this force, or rather the confinement of its operations to objects of defence, the English garrison had calculated on undisturbed security, at least throughout the winter, if not for a longer period; but although it was not until this latter season was far advanced, that the enemy broke up from his entrenchments on the Miami, and pushed himself forward for the attainment of his final view, the error of imputing inactivity to him was discovered at a moment when it was least expected.

It was during a public ball given at Amherstburgh on the 18th of January 1813, that the first intelligence was brought of the advance of a strong American force, whose object it was supposed was to push rapidly on to Detroit, leaving Amherstburgh behind to be disposed of later. The officer who brought this intelligence was the fat Lieutenant Raymond, who commanding an outpost at the distance of some leagues had been surprised, and after a resistance very creditable under the circumstances, driven in by the American advanced guard with a loss of nearly half his command.

Thus, "parva componere magnis," was the same consternation produced in the ball-room at Amherstburg, that, at a later period, occurred in a similar place of amusement at Brussels, and although not followed by the same momentous public results, producing the same host of fluttering fears and anxieties in the bosoms of the female votaries of Terpsichore. We believe, however, that there existed some dissimilarity in the several modes of communication—the Duke of Wellington receiving his with some appearance of regard, on the part of the communicator, for the nerves of the ladies, while to Colonel St. Julian, commanding at Amherstberg, and engaged at the moment at the whist table, the news was imparted *in stentorian* tones, which were audible to every one ing ball-room.

But even if his voice had not been heard, the appearance of Lieutenant Raymond would have justified the apprehension of any reasonable person, for, in the importance of the moment, he had not deemed it necessary to make any change in the dress in which he had been surprised and driven back. Let the reader figure to himself a remarkably fat, ruddy faced man, of middle age, dressed in a pair of tightly fitting dread-nought trowsers, and a shell jacket, that had once been scarlet, but now, from use and exposure, rather resembled the colour of brickdust; boots from which all polish had been taken by the grease employed to render them snow-proof; a brace of pistols thrust into the black waist belt that encircled his huge circumference, and from which depended a sword, whose steel scabbard shewed the rust of the rudest bivouac. Let him, moreover, figure to himself that ruddy carbuncled face, and nearly as ruddy brow, suffused with perspiration, although in a desperately cold winter's night, and the unwashed hands, and mouth, and lips black from the frequent biting of the ends of cartridges, while ever and anon the puffed cheeks, in the effort to procure air and relieve the panting chest, recal the idea of a Bacchus, after one of his most lengthened orgies—let him figure all this, and if he will add short, curling, wiry, damp hair, surmounting a head as round as a turnip, a snubby, red, *retroussé* nose, and light gray eyes; he will have a tolerable idea of the startling figure that thus abruptly made its appearance in the person of Lieutenant Raymond, first among the dancers, and bustlingly thence into the adjoining card room.

At the moment of his entrance, every eye had been turned upon this strange apparition, while an almost instinctive sense of the cause of his presence pervaded every breast. Indeed it was impossible to behold him arrayed in the bivouac garb in which we have described him, contrasted as it was with the elegant ball dresses of his brother officers, and not attribute his presence to some extraordinary motive; and as almost *every one* in the room was aware of his having

been absent on detachment, his mission had been half divined even before he had opened his lips to Colonel St. Julian, for whom, on entering, he had hurriedly inquired.

But when the latter officer was seen soon afterwards to rise from and leave the card table, and, after communicating hurriedly with the several heads of Departments, quit altogether the scene of festivity, there could be no longer a doubt; and, as in all cases of the sort, the danger was magnified, as it flew from lip to lip, even as the tiny snow ball becometh a mountain by the accession it receives in its rolling course. Suddenly the dance was discontinued, and indeed in time, for the fingers of the non-combatant musicians, sharing in the general nervousness, had already given notice, by numerous falsettos, of their inability to proceed much longer. Bonnets, cloaks, muffs, tippets, shawls, snow shoes, and all the paraphernalia of female winter equipment peculiar to the country, were brought unceremoniously in, and thrown *en masse* upon the deserted benches of the ball room. Then was there a scramble among the fair dancers, who, having secured their respective property, quitted the house, not however, without a secret fear on the part of many, that the first object they should encounter, on sallying forth, would be a corps of American sharp-shooters. To the confusion within was added the clamour without, arising from swearing drivers, neighing horses, jingling bells, and jostling sledges. Finally the only remaining ladies of the party were the D'Egvilles, whose sledge had not yet arrived, and with these lingered Captain Molineux, Middlemore, and Henry Grantham, all of whom, having obtained leave of absence for the occasion, had accompanied them from Detroit. The two former, who had just terminated one of the old fashioned cotillons, then peculiar to the Canadas, stood leaning over the chairs of their partners, indulging in no very charitable comments on the unfortunate Raymond, to whose "ugly" presence at that unseasonable hour they ascribed a host of *most important* momentary evils; as, for example, the early

breaking up of the pleasantest ball of the season, the loss of an excellent anticipated supper that had been prepared for a later hour, and, although last not least, the necessity it imposed upon them of an immediate return, that bitter cold night, to Detroit. Near the blazing wood fire, at their side, stood Henry Grantham, and Captain St. Clair of the Engineers. The former with his thoughts evidently far away from the passing scene, the latter joining in the criticisms on Raymond.

"I always said," observed Molineux, shrugging his shoulders, "that he resembled one of the ground hogs of his old command of Bois Blanc, more than any thing human; and hang me if he does not tonight look like a hog in armour."

"There certainly is something of the *armadilla* about him," said Middlemore; "if we may judge from the formidable weapons he brought into the room."

"And, notwithstanding his alert retreat, few officers can have made such *head* against, and shewn such *face* to the enemy," added St. Clair.

"True," retorted Middlemore, "there were certainly some extraordinary *features* in the affair."

"If," remarked Molineux, "he faced the enemy, I am certain he must have kept the boldest at bay; but if he shewed them his back, as from his heated appearance I strongly suspect that he did, he must have afforded the Yankee riflemen as much fun as if they had been in pursuit of a fat old raccoon."

"Shall I ask him that he may answer for himself?" inquired Henry Grantham, whose attention had been aroused by the ironical remarks of his companions.

"By no means," replied Middlemore, "we have *anser* enough in his mere look."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Molineux and St. Clair in concert.

"Nay, nay," interposed Julia D'Egville, who had listened

impatiently to the comments passed upon the unfortunate and unconscious officer, "this keen exercise of your powers on poor Mr. Raymond is hardly fair. Recollect (turning to Middlemore,) it is not given to all to possess the refinement of wit, nor, (addressing St. Clair) the advantages of personal attraction, therefore is it more incumbent on those, to whom such gifts are given, to be merciful unto the wanting in both." This was uttered with marked expression.

"Brava, my most excellent and spirited partner," whispered Molineux, secretly delighted that the lash of the reprover had not immediately embraced him in its circuit.

"Thank you, my good, kind hearted, considerate cousin," looked Henry Grantham.

"Oh, the devil," muttered Middlemore to St. Clair, we shall have her next exclaiming, in the words of Monk Lewis' Bleeding Nun,

> 'Raymond, Raymond, I am thine
> 'Raymond, Raymond, thou art mine.' "

St. Clair shrugged his shoulders, bit his lip, threw up his large blue eyes, shewed his white teeth, slightly reddened, and looked altogether exceedingly at a loss whether to feel complimented or reproved.

"But here comes Mr. Raymond, to fight his own battles," continued Miss D'Egville with vivacity.

"Hush," whispered Molineux.

"Honor among thieves," added Middlemore, in the same low tone.

"Egad," said Raymond, wiping the yet lingering dews from his red forehead, as he advanced from the card room where he had been detained, talking over his adventure with one or two of the anxious townspeople; "I have, within the last twenty four hours, had so much running and fighting for my country, that strength is scarcely left me to fight my *own battles.* But what is it, Miss d'Egville?" as he saluted *Julia and* her sister, "what battle am I to fight now—some

fresh quizzing of these wags, I suppose—ah, Middlemore, how do you do; Molineux, St. Clair, Henry Grantham, how do you all do?"

"Ah, Raymond, my dear fellow, how do you do?" greeted Captain Molineux, with the air of one who really rejoices in the reappearance of a long absent friend.

"Raymond, I am delighted to see you," exclaimed St. Clair.

"Your bivouac has done you good," joined Middlemore, following the example of the others, and extending his hand, "I never saw you looking to greater advantage."

"Pretty well, pretty well thank you," returned the good humoured, but not too acute subaltern, as he passed his hand over his Falstaffian stomach; "only a little fatigued with the last six hours, retreating. Egad! I began to think I never should get away, the fellows pursued us so hotly."

"And hotly you fled, it would appear," returned Middlemore.

"I dare be sworn, there was not a six foot Kentuckian of the whole American army active enough to come within a mile of him," added Molineux.

"And yet, considering the speed he made, he seems to have lost but little of his flesh," said St. Clair.

"Of course," chuckled Middlemore, "these long fellows come from Troy county in Ohio."

"Egad, I don't know; why do you ask?"

"Because you know it is not for the men of *Troy* to reduce the men of *Grease*—hence your escape."

"Are the enemy then so near, Mr. Raymond?" inquired Julia D'Egville, anxious to turn the conversation.

"I should think not very far, Miss D'Egville, since, as you see, they have not given me time to change my dress."

At that moment the noise of horses' bells were heard without; and they were soon distinguished to be those of Colonel D'Egville's berlin.

A few moments afterwards, that officer entered the room.

now wholly deserted save by the little coterie near the fire place. Like Lieutenant Raymond's, his dress was more suited to the bivouac than the ball room, and his countenance otherwise bore traces of fatigue.

His daughters flew to meet him. The officers also grouped around, desirous to hear what tidings he brought of the enemy, to corroborate the statement of Raymond. To the great mortification of the latter, it was now found that he and his little detachment had had all the running to themselves, and that while they fancied the whole of the American army to be close at their heels, the latter had been so kept in check by the force of Indians, under Colonel D'Egville in person, as to be compelled to retire upon the point whence the original attack had been made. They had not followed the broken English outpost more than a mile, and yet, so convinced of close pursuit had been the latter, that for the space of six leagues they had scarce relaxed in their retreat. The information now brought by Colonel D'Egville, was that the Americans had not advanced a single foot beyond the outpost in question, but on the contrary had commenced constructing a stockade, and throwing up entrenchments. He added, moreover, that he had just dispatched an express to Sandwich, to General Proctor, (who had, since the departure of General Brock, succeeded to the command of the district,) communicating the intelligence, and suggesting the propriety of an attack before they could advance farther, and favor any movement on the part of the inhabitants of Detroit. As this counter-movement on our part would require every man that could be spared from the latter fortress, Colonel D'Egville seemed to think that before the officers could reach it, its garrison would be already on the way to join the expedition, which would doubtless be ordered to move from Amherstburg; and as the same impression appeared to exist in the mind of Colonel St. Julian, whom he had only *just parted* from to proceed in search of his daughters, the *latter had* taken it upon himself to determine that they should

remain where they were until the answer, communicating the final decision of General Proctor, should arrive.

If the young officers were delighted at the idea of escaping the horror of an eighteen miles drive, on one of the bitterest nights of the season, supperless, and at the moment of issuing from a comfortable ball room, their annoyance at (what they termed) the pusillanimity of Raymond, who had come thus unnecessarily in, to the utter annihilation of their evening's amusement, was in equal proportion. For this, on their way home, they revenged themselves by every sort of persiflage their humour could adapt to the occasion, until in the end, they completely succeeded in destroying the good humor of Raymond, who eventually quitted them under feelings of mortified pride, which excited all the generous sympathy of the younger Grantham, while it created in his breast a sentiment of almost wrath against his inconsiderate companions. Even these latter were at length sensible that they had gone too far, and, as their better feelings returned, they sought to assure the offended object of their pleasantry that what they had uttered was merely in jest; but finding he received these disclaimers in moody silence, they renewed their attack, nor discontinued it until they separated for their mutual quarters for the night.

Poor Raymond was, it will be perceived, one of those unfortunates termed "butts," which are to be met with in almost all societies, and but too often in a regiment. Conscious of his great corpulence, and its disadvantages to him as a soldier, he not only made every allowance for the sallies of his lively and more favored brother officers, but often good-naturedly joined in the laugh against himself—all the badinage uttered against his personal appearance, he had, on this occasion, borne with the most perfect temper; but when, presuming on his forbearance, they proceeded to reflect on the hurried, and, under all circumstances, justifiable manner of his retreat, after having sustained an unequal conflict *against an overpowering* enemy for upwards of two hours,

his honest heart was wounded to the core; and, although he uttered not one word, the unkindness sank deeply into his memory.

The following dawn broke in, decked with all the sad and sober gray, peculiar to a Canadian sky in the depth of winter, and, with the first rising of the almost rayless sun, commenced numerous warlike preparations that gave promise to the inhabitants of some approaching crisis. The event justified their expectation, the suggestion of Colonel D'Egville had been adopted, and the same express, which carried to General Proctor the information of the advance of the enemy, and the expulsion of Lieutenant Raymond from his post, was pushed on to Detroit, with an order for every man who could be spared from that fortress, to be marched, without a moment's delay, to Amherstburg. At noon the detachment had arrived, and, the General making his appearance soon after, the expedition, composed of the strength of the two garrisons, with a few light guns, and a considerable body of Indians, under the Chief Roundhead, were pushed rapidly across the lake, and the same night occupied the only road by which the enemy could advance.

It was a picturesque sight, to those who lingered on the banks of the Detroit, to watch the movement of that mass of guns, ammunition cars, sledges, &c. preceding the regular march of the troops, as the whole crossed the firm yet rumbling ice, at the head of the now deserted Island of Bois-Blanc. Nor was this at all lessened in effect by the wild and irregular movements of the Indians, who advancing by twos and threes, but more often singly, and bounding nimbly, yet tortuously, along the vast white field with which the outline of their swarthy forms contrasted, called up, at the outset, the idea of a legion of devils.

But there was more than the mere indulgence of curiosity in the contemplation of this scene, so highly characteristic of the *country*. On the result of the efforts of those now scarcely *discernable* atoms, depended the fate, not merely of the town

and garrison of Amherstburgh, but of the whole adjoining country. If successful, then would the repose of the anxious inhabitants once more be secured, and the horrors of invasion again averted from their soil; but if on the contrary, they should be defeated, then must every hope be extinguished, and the so recently conquered completely change sides with their conquerors. Such were the thoughts that filled the breasts of many of the townspeople of Amherstburg, and considering that in the present instance they had much to lose, nothing to gain, they may fairly enough be pardoned for having entertained some litte nervousness as to the result.

It was during one of the coldest mornings of January, that this little army bivouaced on the banks of a small rivulet, distant, little more than a league from the position which had been taken up by the Americans. So unexpected and rapid had been the advance of the expedition, that not the slightest suspicion appeared to have been entertained by the Americans even of its departure; and from information, brought at a late hour by the Indian scouts, who had been dispatched at nightfall to observe their motions, it was gathered that, so far from apprehending or being prepared for an attack, all was quiet in their camp, in which the customary night fires were then burning. Thus favored by the false security of their enemies, the British force, after partaking of their rude, but substantial meal, and preparing their arms, laid themselves down to rest in their accoutrements and great coats; their heads reclining on whatever elevation, however small, presented itself, and their feet half buried in the embers of the fires they had with difficulty kindled on the frozen ground, from which the snow had been removed—all, sanguine of success, and all, more or less endeavouring to snatch, even amid the nipping frost to which their upper persons were exposed, a few hours of sleep prior to the final advance, which was to take place an hour before dawn.

In the midst of the general desolateness of aspect which *encompassed all, there* were few privations, endured by the

men, that were not equally shared by their officers. A solitary and deserted log hut, was the only thing in the shape of a human habitation to be seen within the bivouac, and this had been secured as the head quarters of the General and his staff—all besides had no other canopy than the clear starry heavens, or, here and there, the leafless and unsheltering branches of some forest tree, and yet, around one large and blazing fire, which continued to be fed at intervals by masses of half decayed wood, that, divested of their snow, lay simmering and dying before it, was frequently to be heard the joyous yet suppressed laugh, and piquant sally, as of men whose spirits no temporary hardship or concern for the eventful future could effectually depress. These issued from the immediate bivouac of the officers, who, seated squatted around their fire after the manner of the Indians, instead of courting a sleep which the intense cold rendered as difficult of attainment, as unrefreshing when attained, rather sought solace in humourous conversation, while the animal warmth was kept alive by frequent puffings from that campaigners' first resource the cigar, seasoned by short and occasional libations from the well filled canteen. Most of them wore over their regimentals, the grey great coat then peculiar to the service, and had made these in the highest posssible degree available by fur trimmings on the cuffs and collar, which latter was tightly buttoned round the chin, while their heads were protected by furred caps, made like those of the men, of the raccoon skin. To this uniformity of costume, there was, as far as regarded the outward clothing, one exception in the person of Captain Cranstoun, who had wisely inducted himself in the bear skin coat so frequently quizzed by his companions, and in which he now sat as undisturbed by the cold, so sensibly felt by his associates, as unmoved by the criticisms they passed on its grotesque appearance, and unprovoked by the recurrence to the history of his former ludicrous *adventure*. Finding that Cranstoun was inaccessible, they *again, with* the waywardness of their years and humour, ad-

verted to the retreat of Raymond, to whom Molineux, Middlemore, and St. Clair—the latter a volunteer in the expedition—attributed the unpardonable fact of the breaking up of a most delightful party, and the deprivation of a capital supper. Such was the conversation—such were the serious complaints of men, who, before another sun should rise, might see cause to upbraid themselves, and bitterly, for the levity in which they were so inconsiderately indulging.

During the whole of the march, Raymond had evinced a seriousness of demeanor by no means common to him, and, although he had made one of the party in the general bivouac, he had scarcely opened his lips, except to reply to the most direct questions. The renewed attack, at first, drew from him no comment, although it was evident he felt greatly pained; but when he had finished smoking his cigar, he raised himself, not without difficulty, from the ground, (a circumstance, which, by the way, provoked a fresh burst of humour from the young men,) and began, with a seriousness of manner, that, being unusual, not a little surprised them: "Gentlemen, you have long been pleased to select me as your butt."

"Of course," hastily interrupted Molineux, hazarding his pun, "we naturally select you for what you most resemble."

"Captain Molineux—gentlemen!" resumed Raymond with greater emphasis.

"He is getting warm on the subject," observed Middlemore. "Have a care Molineux, that the butt does not *churn* until in the end it becomes the *butter*."

"Ha! ha! ha!" vociferated St. Clair, "good, excellent, the best you ever made, Middlemore."

"Gentlemen," persevered Raymond, in a tone, and with a gesture, of impatience, "this trifling will be deeply regretted by you all tomorrow; I repeat," he pursued, when he found he had at length secceeded in procuring silence, "you have long been pleased to select me as your butt, and while this was confined to my personal appearance, painful as I have

sometimes found your humour, I could still endure it; but when I perceive those whom I have looked upon as friends and brothers, casting imputations upon my courage, I may be excused for feeling offended. You have succeeded in wounding my heart, and some of you will regret the hour when you did so. Another perhaps, would adopt a different course, but I am not disposed to return evil for evil. I wish to believe, that in all your taunts upon this subject, you have merely indulged your bantering humour—but not the less have you pained an honest heart. Tomorrow will prove that you have grievously wronged me, and I am mistaken, if you will not deeply regret it."

"Noonsense, noonsense, Raymoond, ma deer fallow; do na' heed the queeps of the hair-breened deevils. Ye see a neever tak any nootice o' them, but joost leet them ha' their way."

But Raymond stayed not—he hurried away across the snow towards a distant fire, which lighted the ruder bivouac of the adjutant and quarter master, and was there seen to seat himself, with the air of one who has composed himself for the night.

"What a silly fellow, to take the thing so seriously," said Molineux, half vexed at himself, half moved by the reproachful tone of Raymond's address.

"For God's sake, Grantham, call him back. Tell him we are ready to make any—every atonement for our offence," urged St. Clair.

"And I will promise never to utter another pun at his expense as long as I live," added Middlemore.

But before Henry Grantham, who had been a pained and silent witness of the scene, and who had already risen with a view to follow the wounded Raymond, could take a single step on his mission of peace, the low roll of the drum, summoning to fall in, warned them that the hour of action had already arrived, and each, quitting his fire, hastened to the more immediate and pressing duties of assembling his men,

and carefully examining into the state of their appointments.

In ten minutes from the beating of the *reveillé*—considerably shorn of its wonted proportions, as the occasion demanded—the bivouac had been abandoned, and the little army again upon their march. What remained to be traversed of the space that separated them from the enemy, was an alternation of plain and open forest, but so completely in juxtaposition, that the head of the column had time to clear one wood and enter a second before its rear could disengage itself from the first. The effect of this, by the dim and peculiar light reflected from the snow across which they moved, was picturesque in the extreme, nor was the interest diminished by the utter silence that had pervaded every part of the little army, the measured tramp of whose march, mingled with the hollow and unavoidable rumbling of the light guns, being the only sounds to be heard amid that mass of living matter. The Indians, with the exception of a party of scouts, had been the last to quit their rude encampment, and as they now, in their eagerness to get to the front, glided stealthily by in the deep snows on either side of the more beaten track by which the troops advanced, and so utterly without sound in their foot-fall, that they might rather have been compared to spirits of the wilds, than to human beings.

The regiment having been told off into divisions, it so happened that Raymond and Henry Grantham, although belonging to different companies, now found themselves near each other. The latter had been most anxious to approach his really good hearted companion, with a view to soothe his wounded feelings, and to convey, in the fullest and most convincing terms, the utter disclaimer of his inconsiderate brother officers, to reflect seriously on his conduct in the recent retreat—or, indeed, to intend their observations for any thing beyond a mere pleasantry. As, however, the strictest order had been commanded to be observed in the march, and Raymond and he happened to be at opposite extremities of

the division, this had been for some time impracticable. A temporary halt having occurred, just as the head of the column came within sight of the enemy's fires, Grantham quitted his station on the flank, and hastened to the head of his division, where he found Raymond with his arms folded across his chest, and apparently absorbed in deep thought. He tapped him lightly on the shoulder, and inquired in a tone of much kindness the subject of his musing.

Touched by the manner in which he was addressed, Raymand dropped his arms, and grasping the hand of the youth, observed in his usual voice; "Ah, is it you Henry—Egad, my dear boy, I was just thinking of you--and how very kind you have always been; never quizzing me as those thoughtless fellows have done—and certainly never insinuating any thing against my courage—that was too bad Henry, too bad, I could have forgiven anything but that."

"Nay, nay, Raymond," answered his companion, soothingly; "believe me, neither Molineux, nor Middlemore, nor St. Clair, meant anything beyond a jest. I can assure you they did not, for when you quitted us they asked me to go in search of you, but the assembly then commencing to beat, I was compelled to hasten to my company, nor have I had an opportunity of seeing you until now."

"Very well, Henry, I forgive them, for it is not in my nature to keep anger long; but tell them that they should not wantonly wound the feelings of an unoffending comrade. As I told them, they may regret their unkindness to me before another sun has set. If so, I wish them no other punishment."

"What mean you, my dear Raymond?"

"Egad! I scarcely know myself, but something tells me very forcibly my hour is come."

"Nonsense, this is but the effect of the depression, produced by fatigue and over excitement, added to the recent *annoyance* of your feelings."

"*Whatever* it proceed from, I had made up my mind

to it before we set out. Henry, my kind good Henry, I have neither friend nor relative on earth—no one to inherit the little property I possess. In the event of my falling, you will find the key of my desk in the breast pocket of my coat. A paper in that desk appoints you my executor. Will you accept the trust?"

"Most sacredly, Raymond, will I fulfil every instruction it contains, should I myself survive; but I cannot, will not, bring myself to anticipate your fall."

"Move on, move on," passed quickly in a whisper from front to rear of the column.

"God bless you, Henry" exclaimed Raymond, again pressing the hand of the youth—"remember the key."

"We shall talk of that to night," was the light reply. "Meanwhile, dear Raymond, God bless you," and again Grantham fell back to his place in the rear of the division.

Five minutes later, and the troops were silently drawn up in front of the enemy. A long line of fires marked the extent of the encampment, from which, even then, the "all's well" of the sentinels could be occasionally heard. Except these, all profoundly slept, nor was there anything to indicate they had the slightest suspicion of an enemy being within twenty miles of them—not a picket had been thrown out, not an outpost established. It was evident the Americans were yet young in the art of self defence.

"What glorious bayonet work we shall have presently," whispered Villiers to Cranstoun, as they were brought together by their stations at the adjacent extremities of their respective division. "Only mark how the fellows sleep."

"The deevil a beet," responded Cranstoun, "a joost noo heerd Coolonel St Julian propoose and even enseest upoon it. But the Geeneral seems to theenk that coold steel and a coold froosty morning do not asseemelate togeether.

"What! does he not mean to attack them with the bayonet, when two minutes would suffice to bring us into the

very heart of the encampment, and that before they could well have time to arm themselves ?

" Hoot mon" coolly pursued the Grenadier, with something very like satire in his expression. " Would ye ha' the Geeneral so uncheevalrous as to poonce upoon a set of poor unarmed and unprepared creeturs. Depeend upoon it he would na sleep coomfortably on his peelow, after having put coold steel into the geezzard of each of yon sleeping loons"

" The devil take his consideration," muttered Villiers ; " but you are right, for see, there go the guns to the front—hark there is a shot ; the sentinels have discovered us at last ; and now the sluggards are starting from before their fires, and hastening to snatch their arms.

" True enoof, Veelliers, and pleenty o' brooken heeds they will gi' us soon, in retoorn for sparing their goots. There oopen too those stooped leetle three poonders. Tha might joost as weel be used for brass warming pons, to tak the cheel off the damp beeds some of us will be pressing preesently."

Whist, whist, whist, flew three balls successively between their heads. " Ha, here they begin to talk to us in earnest, and now to our duty."

The next moment all was roar, and bustle, and confusion, and death.

We will not stop to inquire why the British General, Proctor, lost an advantage which had made itself apparent to the meanest soldier of his army, by opening a desultory and aimless fire of his light guns upon an enemy to whom he thus afforded every possible opportunity for preparation and defence ; when, like Colonel, (now Sir John) Harvey, not long subsequently at Stoney Creek, he might have annihilated that enemy with the bayonet, and with little comparative loss to himself. We will merely observe that having failed to do so, nothing but the determination and courage of his troops brought him through the difficulties he *himself* had created, and to the final attainment of the gene-

ral order, complimenting him on the highly judicious arrangements he had made on the occasion; although, (as Cranstoun had predicted) not before a damp bed had been pressed for the last time by more than one of those who had so gallantly followed—or, more strictly, preceded him.

The sun was in the meridian; all sounds of combat had ceased, and such of the American Army as had survived the total defeat, were to be seen disarmed and guarded, wending their way sullenly in the direction by which the victors had advanced in the morning. From the field, in which the troops had commenced the action, numerous sledges were seen departing, laden with the dead—the wounded having previously been sent off. One of these sledges remained stationary at some distance within the line, where the ravages of death were marked by pools of blood upon the snow, and at this point were grouped several individuals, assembled round a body which was about to be conveyed away.

"By Heavens, I would give the world never to have said an unkind word to him," observed one, whose arm, suspended from a sling, attested he had not come scatheless out of the action. It was St. Clair, whose great ambition it had always been to have his name borne among the list of wounded—provided there were no broken bones in the question.

"As brave as he was honest hearted," added a second, "you say Grantham, that he forgave us all our nonsense."

"He did, Molineux. He declared he could not bear resentment against you long. But still, I fear, he could not so easily forget. He observed to me, jestingly, just before deploying into line, that he felt his time was come, but there can be no doubt, from what we all witnessed, that he was determined from the outset to court his death."

Captain Molineux turned away, apparently much affected —Middlemore spoke not, but it was evident he also was deeply pained. Each seemed to feel that he had been in some degree accessory to the catastrophe, but the past could not be *recalled*. The body, covered with blood, exuding from

several wounds, was now placed with that of Ensign Langley, (who had also fallen, and lay at a little distance beyond), on the sledge which was drawn off to join several others just departed, and the lingering officers hastened to overtake their several companies.

When the action was at the hottest, one of the small guns in front (all of which had been fearfully exposed), was left without a single artilleryman. Availing themselves of this circumstance, the enemy, who were unprovided with artillery of any description, made a movement as if to possess themselves of, and turn it against the attacking force, then closing rapidly to dispute the possession of the breast work which covered their riflemen. Colonel St. Julian, who had continued to ride along the line with as much coolness as if he had been assisting at a field day, and who was literally covered with wounds, having received no less than five balls, in various parts of his body, seeing this movement, called out for volunteers to recue the gun from its perilous situation. Scarcely had the words passed his lips when an individual moved forward from the line, in the direction indicated.—It was Lieutenant Raymond—Exposed to the fire, both of friends and foes, the unfortunate officer advanced calmly and unconcernedly, in the presence of the whole line, and before the Americans, (kept in check by a hot and incessant musketry), could succeed in even crossing their defences, had seized the gun by the drag rope, and withdrawn it under cover of the English fire. But this gallant act of self-devotedness was not without its terrible price. Pierced by many balls, which the American rifleman had immediately directed at him, he fell dying within ten feet of the British line, brandishing his sword and faintly shouting a "huzza," that was answered by his companions with the fierce spirit of men stung to new exertion, and determined to avenge his fall.

Thus perished the fat, the plain, the carbuncled, but really *gallant-hearted* Raymond—whose intrinsic worth was never *estimated* until he had ceased to exist. His fall, and all con-

nected therewith, forms a sort of episode in our story, yet is it one not altogether without its moral. A private monument, on which was inscribed all that may soothe and flatter after death, was erected to his memory by those very officers whose persiflage, attacking in this instance even his honor as a soldier, had driven him to seek the fate he found. Of this there could be no question—for, brave as he unquestionably was, Raymond would not have acted as if courting death throughout, had he not fully made up his mind either to gain great distinction or to die under the eyes of those who had, he conceived, so greatly injured him. It is but justice to add that, for three days from his death—Middlemore did not utter a single pun—neither did St. Clair, or Molineux, indulge in a satirical observation.

CHAPTER V.

THE spring of 1813 had passed nearly away, yet without producing any renewed effort on the part of the Americans. From information obtained from the Indian scouts, it however appeared that, far from being discouraged by their recent disaster, they had moved forward a third Army to the Miami, where they had strongly entrenched themselves, until fitting opportunity should be found to renew their attempt to recover the lost district. It was also ascertained that, with a perseverance and industry peculiar to themselves, they had been occupied throughout the rigorous winter, in preparing a fleet of sufficient force to compete with that of the British; and that, abandoning the plan hitherto pursued by his predecessors, the American leader of this third army of invasion, purposed transporting his troops across the lake, instead of running the risk of being harrassed and cut up in an advance by land. To effect this, it was of course necessary to have the command of the lake, and there were all the sinews of exertion called into full exercise, to obtain the desired ascendancy.

To defeat this intention, became now the chief object of the British General. With the close of winter had ceased the hunting pursuits of the warriors, so that each day brought with it a considerable accession to the strength of this wild people, vast numbers of whom had betaken themselves to their hunting grounds, shortly after the capture of Detroit. The chiefs of these several nations were now summoned to a Council, in the course of which it was decided that a formidable expedition, accompanied by a heavy train of battering artillery, should embark in batteaux, with a view to the

reduction of the American post established on the Miami; —a nucleus, around which was fast gathering a spirit of activity that threatened danger, if not annihilation, to the English influence in the North Western districts. In the event of the accomplishment of this design, Detroit and Amherstburg would necessarily be released from all apprehension, since, even admitting the Americans could acquire a superiority of naval force on the lake, such superiority could only be essentially injurious to us, as a means of affording transport to, and covering the operations of an invading army. If, however, that already on the Miami could be defeated, and their fortress razed, it was not probable that a fourth could be equipped and pushed forward, with a view to offensive operations, in sufficient time to accomplish any thing decisive before the winter should set in. Tecumseh, who had just returned from collecting new bodies of warriors, warmly approved the project, and undertook to bring two thousand men into the field, as his quota of the expedition, the departure of which was decided for the seventh day from the Council.

Meanwhile, no exertions were wanting to place the little fleet in a state of efficiency. During the winter, the vessel described in our opening chapter of this tale, as that on the completion of which numerous workmen were intently engaged, had, after the fall of Detroit, and the consequent capture of whatever barks the Americans possessed, been utterly neglected; but now that it was known the enemy were secretly and rapidly preparing an overpowering force at the opposite extremity of the lake, the toils of the preceding summer were renewed, and every where, throughout the dock-yard, the same stirring industry was perceptible. By all were these movements regarded with an interest proportioned to the important consequences at stake, but by none more than by Commodore Barclay himself, whose watchful eye marked the progress, and whose experience and judgment directed the organization of the whole. The difficulties *he had to contend* with were great, for not only were the

artificers, employed in the construction of the ship, men of limited knowledge in their art, but even those who manned her, when completed, were without the nautical experience and practice indispensable to success; yet these disadvantages was he prepared to overlook in the cheerfuless and ardor with which each lent himself to exertion, and sought to supply deficiency with zeal. The feelings of the gallant officer in this position—on the one hand, sensible that to him was confided the task of upholding the supremacy of his country's flag, and on the other, compelled to confess the inadequacy of the means placed at his disposal for this object—may be easily understood. That his men were brave he knew, but mere bravery would not suffice in a contest where the skill of the seamen, not less than brute courage, must be called into requisition. He had reason to know that his enemy would not merely bring stout hearts into the conflict, but active hands —men whose lives had been passed on the restless waters of ocean, and whose training had been perfected in the battle and the tempest, while nine tenths of his own crews had never planted foot beyond the limit of the lake on which the merits and rescources of both would be so shortly tested. But "*aut agere aut mori*," was his motto, and of the appropriateness of this his actions have formed the most striking illustration.

The day on which the Council relative to the proposed expedition to the Miami was held, was characterized by one of those sudden outbursts of elemental war, so common to the Canadas in early summer—and, which, in awful grandeur of desolation, are frequently sarcely inferior to the hurricanes of the tropics. The morning had been oppressively sultry, and there was that general and heavy lethargy of nature that usually precedes a violent reaction. About noon, a small dark speck was visible in the hitherto cloudless horizon, and this presently grew in size until the *whole* western sky was one dense mass of threatening black, *which eventually* spread itself over the entire surface of the

heavens, leaving not a hand's breadth any where visible. Presently, amid the sultry stillness that prevailed, there came a slight breeze over the face of the waters, and then, as if some vast battering train had suddenly opened its hundred mouths of terror, vomiting forth showers of grape and other missiles, came astounding thunder-claps, and forked lightnings, and rain, and hail, and whistling wind—all in such terrible union, yet such fearful disorder, that man, the last to take warning, or feel awed by the anger of the common parent, Nature, bent his head in lowliness and silence to her voice, and awaited tremblingly the passing away of her wrath.

Henry Grantham, whose turn of duty had again brought him to Amherstburg, was in the mess-room of the garrison when the storm was at the fiercest. Notwithstanding the excitement of the Council scene, at which he had been present, he had experienced an unusual depression throughout the day, originating partly in the languid state of the atmosphere, but infinitely more in the anxiety under which he labored in regard to his brother, of whom no other intelligence had been received, since his departure with his prisoners for Buffalo, than what vague rumour, coupled with the fact of the continued absence of the schooner, afforded. That the vessel had been captured by the enemy there could be no doubt; but, knowing as he did, the gallant spirit of Gerald, there was reason to imagine that he had not yielded to his enemies, before every means of resistance had been exhausted: and, if so, what might not have been the effect of his obstinacy (if such a term could be applied to unshaken intrepidity,) on men exasperated by opposition, and eager for revenge. In the outset he had admitted his gentle cousin Gertrude to his confidence, as one most suited, by her docility, to soothe without appearing to remark on his alarm, but when, little suspecting the true motive of her agitation, he saw her evince an emotion surpassing his own, and admitting and *giving way to fears* beyond any he would openly avow,

he grew impatient and disappointed, and preferring rather to hear the tocsin of alarm sounded from his own heart than from the lips of another, he suddenly, and much to the surprise of the affectionate girl, discontinued all allusion to the subject. But Henry's anxiety was not the less poignant from being confined within his own breast, and although it gratified him to find that flattering mention was frequently made of his brother at the mess-table, coupled with regret for his absence, it was reserved for his hours of privacy and abstraction to dwell upon the fears which daily became more harrassing and perplexing.

On the present occasion, even while his brother officers had thought nor ear but for the terrible tempest that raged without, and at one moment threatened to bury them beneath the trembling roof, the mind of Henry was full of his absent brother, whom, more than ever, he now seemed to regret, from the association of the howling tempest with the wild element on which he had last beheld him; and so complete at length had become the ascendancy of his melancholy, that when the storm had been in some degree stilled, and the rain abated, he took an early leave of his companions, with a view to indulge in privacy the gloomy feelings by which he felt himself oppressed.

In passing through the gate of the Fort, on his way into the town, his attention was arrested by several groups of persons, consisting of soldiers, Indians, and inhabitants, who, notwithstanding the inclemency of the hour, were gathered on the high bank in front of the *demi-lune* battery, eagerly bending their gaze upon the river. Half curious to know what could have attracted them in such weather from shelter, Henry advanced and mingled in the crowd, which gave way at his approach. Although the fury of the tempest had spent itself, there was still wind enough to render it a matter of necessary precaution that the bystanders should secure a firm footing on the bank, while the water, violently agitated and covered with foam, resembled rather

a pigmy sea than an inland river—so unusual and so vast were its waves. The current, moreover, increased in strength by the sudden swelling of the waters, dashed furiously down, giving its direction to the leaping billows that rode impatiently upon its surface; and at the point of intersection by the island of Bois Blanc, formed so violent an eddy within twenty feet of the land, as to produce the effect of a whirlpool, while again, between the island and the Canadian shore, the current, always rapid and of great force, flew boiling down its channel, and with a violence almost quadrupled.

Amid this uproar of the usually placid river, there was but one bark found bold enough to venture upon her angered bosom, and this, although but an epitome of those that have subdued the world of waters, and chained them in subservience to the will of man, now danced gallantly, almost terrifically, from billow to billow, and, with the feathery lightness of her peculiar class, seemed borne onward, less by the leaping waves themselves than by the white and driving spray that fringed their summits. This bark—a canoe evidently of the smallest description—had been watched in its progress, from afar, by the groups assembled on the bank, who had gathered at each other's call, to witness and marvel at the gallant daring of those who had committed it to the boiling element. Two persons composed her crew—the one, seated in the stern, and carefully guiding the bark so as to enable her to breast the threatening waves, which, in quick succession, rose as if to accomplish her overthrow—the other, standing at her bows, the outline of his upper figure designed against the snow-white sail, and, with his arms folded across his chest, apparently gazing without fear on the danger which surrounded him. It was evident, from their manner of conducting the bark, that the adventurers were not Indians, and yet there was nothing to indicate to what class of the white family they belonged. Both were closely wrapped in short, dark coloured pea coats, and their heads were surmounted

with glazed hats—a species of costume that more than any thing else, proved their familiarity with the element whose brawling they appeared to brave with an indifference bordering on madness.

Such was the position of the parties, at the moment when Henry Grantham gained the bank. Hitherto the canoe, in the broad reach that divided the island from the American mainland, had had merely the turbulence of the short heavy waves, and a comparatively modified current, to contend against. Overwhelming even as these difficulties would have proved to men less gifted with the power of opposing and vanquishing them, they were but light in comparison with what remained to be overcome. The canoe was now fast gaining the head of the island, and pursuing a direct course for the whirlpool already described. The only means of avoiding this was by closely hugging the shore, between which and the violent eddy without, the water, broken in its impetuosity by the covering head land, presented a more even and less agitated surface. This head land once doubled, the safety of the adventurers was ensured, since, although the tremendous current which swept through the inner channel must have borne them considerably downwards, still the canoe would have accomplished the transit below the town in perfect safety. The fact of this opportunity being neglected, led at once to the inference that the adventurers were total strangers, and distinct voices were now raised by those on the bank, to warn them of their danger—but whether it was that they heard not, or understood not, the warning was unnoticed. Once indeed it seemed as if he who so ably conducted the course of the bark, had comprehended and would have followed the suggestion so earnestly given, for his tiny sail was seen to flutter for the first time in the wind, as with the intention to alter his course. But an impatient gesture from his companion in the bow, who was seen to turn suddenly round, and utter something, (which was however inaudible to those on shore,) again brought the head of the fra-

gile vessel to her original course, and onward she went leaping and bounding, apparently with the design to clear the whirlpool at a higher point of the river. Nothing short of a miracle could now possibly enable them to escape being drawn into the boiling vortex, and, during the moments that succeeded, every heart beat high with fearful expectation as to the result. At length the canoe came with a sudden plunge into the very centre of the current, which, all the skill of the steersman was insufficient to enable him to clear. Her bow yawed, her little sail fluttered—and away she flew, broadside foremost, down the stream with as little power of resistance as a feather or a straw. Scarcely had the eye time to follow her in this peculiar descent, when she was in the very heart of the raging eddy. For a moment she reeled like a top, then rolled two or three times over, and finally disappeared altogether. Various expressions of horror broke from the several groups of whites and Indians, all of whom had anticipated the catastrophe without the power of actively interposing. Beyond the advice that was given, not a word was uttered, but every eye continued fixed on the whirlpool, as though momentarily expecting to see something issue from its bosom. After the lapse of a minute, a dark object suddenly presented itself some twenty yards below, between the island and the town. It was the canoe which, bottom upwards, and deprived of its little mast and sail, had again risen to the surface, and was floating rapidly down with the current. Presently afterwards two heads were seen nearly at the point where the canoe had again emerged. They were the unfortunate adventurers, one of whom appeared to be supporting his companion with one arm, whilst with the other he dashed away the waters that bore them impetuously along. The hats of both had fallen off, and as he who exerted himself so strenuously, rose once or twice in the vigour of his efforts above the element with which he contended, he seemed to present the grisly, woolly hair, and the sable countenance of an aged negro. A vague surmise of the

truth now flashed upon the mind, of the excited officer, but when, presently afterwards, he saw the powerful form once more raised, and in a voice that made itself distinctly heard above the howling of the wind, exclaim : "Help a dare," there was no longer a doubt, and he rushed towards the dock yard, to gain which the exertions of the negro were now directed.

On reaching it, he found both Gerald and his faithful attendant just touching the shore. Aroused by the cry for help which Sambo had pealed forth, several of the workmen had quitted the shelter of the block houses in which they were lodged, and hastened to the rescue of him whom they immediately afterwards saw struggling furiously to free himself and companion from the violent current. Stepping to the extremity on some loose timber which lay secured to the shore, yet floating in the river—they threw out poles, one of which Sambo seized like an enraged mastiff in his teeth, and still supporting the body, and repelling the water with his disengaged arm, in this manner succeeded in gaining the land. The crews of the little fleet, which lay armed a hundred yards lower down, had also witnessed the rapid descent of two apparently drowning men, and ropes had every where been thrown out from the vessels. As for lowering a boat it was out of the question, for no boat could have resisted the violence of the current, even for some hours after the storm had wholly ceased.

It may be easily conceived with what mingled emotions the generous Henry, whose anxiety had been so long excited in regard to his brother's fate, now beheld that brother suddenly restored to him. Filled with an affection, that was rendered the more intense by the very fact of the danger from which he had just seen him rescued, he, regardless of those around, and in defiance of his wet and dripping clothes, sprang eagerly to his embrace, but Gerald received him with *a cold*—almost averted air. Suffering, rather than sharing, *this mark of* his fraternal love, he turned the instant after-

wards to his servant, and in a tone of querulousness, said—"Sambo, give me more wine."

Inexpressibly shocked, and not knowing what to make of this conduct, Henry bent his glance upon the negro. The old man shook his head mournfully, and even with the dripping spray that continued to fall from his woollen locks upon his cheeks, tears might be seen to mingle. A dreadful misgiving came over the mind of the youth, and he felt his very hair rise thrillingly, as he for a moment admitted the horrible possibility, that the shock produced by his recent accident had affected his brother's intellect. Sambo replied to his master's demand, by saying "there was no wine—the canoe and its contents had been utterly lost."

All this passed during the first few moments of their landing. The necessity for an immediate change of apparel was obvious, and Gerald and his servant were led into the nearest block house, where each of the honest fellows occupying it was eager in producing whatever his rude wardrobe afforded. The brothers then made the best of their way, followed by the negro, to their own abode in the town.

The evening being damp and chilly, a fire was kindled in the apartment in which Gerald dined—the same in which both had witnessed the dying moments of their mother, and Henry those of their father. It had been chosen by the former, in the height of her malady, for its cheerfulness, and she had continued in it until the hour of her decease; while Major Grantham had selected it for his chamber of death, for the very reason, that it had been that of his regretted wife. Henry, having already dined, sat at the opposite extremity of the table, watching his brother whose features he had so longed to behold once more; yet, not without a deep and bitter feeling of grief that those features should have undergone so complete a change in their expression towards himself. Gerald had thrown off the temporary and ill fitting vestments exchanged for his own wet clothing, and now that he appeared once more in his customary garb, an

extraordinary alteration was perceptible in his whole appearance. Instead of the blooming cheek, and rounded and elegant form, for which he had always been remarkable, he now offered to the eye of his anxious brother an emaciated figure, and a countenance pale even unto wanness—while evidence of much care, and inward suffering, might be traced in the stern contraction of his hitherto open brow. There was also a dryness in his speech that startled and perplexed even more than the change in his person. The latter might be the effect of imprisonment, and its anxiety and privation, coupled with the exhaustion arising from his recent accident, but how was the first to be accounted for, and wherefore was he, after so long a separation, and under such circumstances, thus uncommunicative and unaffectionate? All these reflections occurred to the mind of the sensitive Henry, as he sat watching, and occasionally addressing a remark to, his taciturn brother, until he became fairly bewildered in his efforts to find a clue to his conduct. The horrible dread which had first suggested itself, of the partial overthrow of intellect, had passed away, but to this had succeeded a discovery, attended by quite as much concern—although creating less positive alarm. He had seen, with inexpressible pain, that Gerald ate but little, seeming rather to loathe his food, while on the other hand, he had recourse more frequently to wine, drinking off bumpers with greedy avidity, until, yielding at length to the excess of his potations, he fell fast asleep in the arm chair he had drawn to the fire, overcome by the mingled influence of wine, fatigue, and drowsiness.

Bitter were the feelings of Henry Grantham, as thus he gazed upon his sleeping brother. Fain would he have persuaded himself, that the effect he now witnessed was an isolated instance, and occurring only under the peculiar circumstances of the moment. It was impossible to recal the manner in which he had demanded "wine," from their *faithful* old servant and friend, and not feel satisfied, that the *tone* proclaimed him one who had been in the frequent habit

of repeating that demand, as the prepared, yet painful manner of the black, indicated a sense of having been too frequently called upon to administer to it. Alas, thought the heart-stricken Henry, can it really be, that he whom I have cherished in my heart of hearts, with more than brother's love has thus fallen? Has Gerald, formerly as remarkable for sobriety, as for every honorable principle, acquired even during the months I have so wretchedly mourned his absence, the fearful propensities of the drunkard. The bare idea overpowered him, and with difficulty restraining his tears, he rose from his seat, and paced the room for some time, in a state of indescribable agitation. Then again he stopped, and when he looked in the sleeping face of his unconscious brother, he was more than ever struck by the strange change which had been wrought in his appearance. Finding that Gerald still slept profoundly, he took the resolution of instantly questioning Sambo, as to all that had befallen them during their absence, and ascertaining, if possible, to what circumstance the mystery which perplexed him was attributable. Opening and reclosing the door with caution, he hastened to the room, which, owing to his years and long and faithful services, had been set apart for the accommodation of the old man when on shore. Here he found Sambo, who had dispatched his substantial meal, busily occupied in drying his master's wet dress, before a large blazing wood fire—and laying out, with the same view, certain papers, the contents of a pocket book, which had been completely saturated with water. A ray of satisfaction lighted the dark, but intelligent face of the negro, which the instant before, had worn an expression of suffering, as the young officer, pressing his hand with warmth, thanked him deeply and fervently, for the noble, almost superhuman exertions he had made that day, to preserve his brother's life.

"Oh Massa Henry," was all the poor creature could say in reply, as he returned the pressure with an emphasis that spoke his *profound* attachment to both. Then leaning his

white head upon his hand against the chimney, and bursting into tears; "berry much change, he poor broder Geral, he not a same at all."

Here was a sad opening indeed to the subject. The heart of the youth sank within him, yet feeling the necessity of knowing all connected with his brother's unhappiness, he succeeded in drawing the old man into conversation, and finally into a narration of all their adventures, as far, at least, as he had personal knowledge, from the moment of their leaving Detroit in the preceding autumn.

When, after the expiration of an hour, he returned to the drawing room, Gerald was awake, and so far restored by the effect of his sound sleep, as to be, not only more communicative, but more cordial towards his brother. He even reverted to past scenes, and spoke of the mutual frolics of their youth, with a cheerfulness bordering on levity; but this pained Henry the more, for he saw in it but the fruit of a forced excitement—as melancholy in adoption as pernicious in effect—and his own heart repugned all participation in so unnatural a gaiety, although, he enforced himself to share it to the outward eye. Fatigue at length compelled Gerald to court the quiet of his pillow, and, overcome as his senses were with wine, he slept profoundly until morning.

CHAPTER VI.

WHEN they met at breakfast, Henry was more than ever struck and afflicted by the alteration in his brother's person and manner. All traces of the last night's excitement had disappeared with its cause, and pale, haggard, and embarrassed, he seemed but the shadow of his former self, while the melancholy of his countenance had in it something wild and even fierce. As at their first meeting, his language was dry and reserved, and he seemed rather impatient of conversation, as though it interfered with the indulgence of some secret and all absorbing reflection, while, to Henry's affectionate questioning of his adventures since they first parted, he replied in the vague unsatisfactory manner of one who seeks to shun the subject altogether. At another moment, this apparent prostration of the physical man might have been ascribed to his long immersion of the preceding day, and the efforts that were necessary to rescue him from a watery grave; but, from the account Sambo had given him, Henry had but too much reason to fear that the disease of body and mind which had so completely encompassed his unfortunate brother, not only had its being in a different cause, but might be dated from an earlier period. Although burning with desire to share that confidence which it grieved him to the soul to find thus unkindly withheld, he made no effort to remove the cloak of reserve in which his brother had invested himself. That day they both dined at the garrison mess, and Henry saw, with additional pain, that the warm felicitation of his brother officers on his return, were received by Gerald with the same reserve and indifference which had characterized his meeting with him, while he evinced the

same disinclination to enter upon the solicited history of his captivity, as well as the causes which led to his bold venture, and consequent narrow escape, of the preceding day. Finding him thus uncommunicative, and not comprehending the change in his manner, they rallied him; and, as the bottle circulated, he seemed more and more disposed to meet their raillery with a cheerfulness and good humour that brought even the color into his sunken cheeks; but when, finally, some of them proceeded to ask him, in their taunting manner, what he had done with his old flame and fascinating prisoner, Miss Montgomerie, a deadly paleness overspread his countenance, and he lost in the moment, all power of disguising his feelings. His emotion was too sudden, and too palpable not to be observed by those who had unwillingly called it forth, and they at once, with considerate tact, changed the conversation. Hereupon Gerald again made an effort to rally, but no one returned to the subject. Piqued at this conduct, he had more frequent recourse to the bottle, and laughed and talked in a manner that proved him to be laboring under the influence of extraordinary excitement. When he took leave of his brother to retire to rest, he was silent, peevish, dissatisfied—almost angry.

Henry passed a night of extreme disquiet. It was evident from what had occurred at the mess-table, in relation to the beautiful American, that to her was to be ascribed the wretchedness to which Gerald had become a victim, and he resolved, on the following morning, to waive all false delicacy, and, throwing himself upon his affection, to solicit his confidence, and offer whatever counsel he conceived would best tend to promote his peace of mind.

At breakfast the conversation turned on the intended movement, which was to take place within three days, and, on this subject, Gerald evinced a vivacity that warmed into eagerness. He had risen early that morning, with a view to *obtain the permission* of the Commodore to make one of the *detachment of* sailors who were to accompany the expedition,

and, having succeeded in obtaining the command of one of the two gun-boats which were destined to ascend the Miami, and form part of the battering force, seemed highly pleased. This apparant return to himself might have led his brother into the belief that his feelings had indeed undergone a reaction, had he not, unfortunately, but too much reason to know that the momentary gaiety was the result of the very melancholy which consumed him. However, it gave him a more favorable opportunity to open the subject next his heart, and, as a preparatory step, he dexterously contrived to turn the conversation into the channel most suited to his purpose.

The only ill effect arising from Gerald's recent immersion was a sense of pain in that part of his arm which had been bitten by the rattle snake, on the day of the pic-nic to Hog Island, and it chanced that this morning especially it had a good deal annoyed him, evincing some slight predisposition to inflammation. To subdue this, Henry applied, with his own hand, a liniment which had been recommended, and took occasion, when he had finished, to remark on the devotedness and fearlessness Miss Montgomerie had manifested in coming so opportunely to his rescue—in all probability, thereby preserving his life.

At the sound of this name Gerald started, and evinced the same impatience of the subject he had manifested on the preceding day. Henry keenly remarked his emotion, and Gerald was sensible that he did.

Both sat for some minutes gazing at each other in expressive silence, the one as if waiting to hear, the other as if conscious that he was expected to afford some explanation of the cause of so marked an emotion. At length Gerald said, and in a tone of deep and touching despondency, "Henry, I fear you find me very unamiable and much altered; but indeed I am very unhappy."

Here was touched the first chord of their sympathies. Henry's already on the *élan*, flew to meet this demonstration

of returning confidence, and he replied in a voice broken by the overflowing of his full heart.

"Oh, my beloved brother, changed must you indeed be, when even the admission that you are unhappy, inspires me with a thankfulness such as I now feel. Gerald, I entreat, I implore, you by the love we have borne each other from infancy to disguise nothing from me. Tell me what it is that weighs so heavily at your heart. Repose implicit confidence in me, your brother, and let me assist and advise you in your extremity, as my poor ability will permit. Tell me Gerald, wherefore are you thus altered—what dreadful disappointment has thus turned the milk of your nature into gall?"

Gerald gazed at him a moment intently. He was much affected, and a sudden and unbidden tear stole down his pallid cheek. "If *you* have found the milk of my nature turned into gall, then indeed am I even more wretched than I thought myself. But, Henry, you ask me what I cannot yield—my confidence—and, even were it so, the yielding would advantage neither. I am unhappy, as I have said, but the cause of that unhappiness must ever remain buried here," and he pointed to his chest. This was said kindly, yet determinedly.

"Enough, Gerald," and his brother spoke in tones of deep reproach, "since you persist in withholding your confidence, I will no longer urge it; but you cannot wonder that I who love but you alone on earth, should sorrow as one without hope, at beholding you subject to a grief so overwhelming as to have driven you to seek refuge from it, in an unhallowed grave."

"I do not understand you—what mean you?" quickly interrupted Gerald, raising his head from the hand which supported it upon the breakfast table, while he colored faintly.

"You cannot well be ignorant of my meaning," pursued Henry in the same tone, "if you but recur to the circumstances attending your arrival here."

"I am still in the dark," continued Gerald, with some degree of impatience.

"Because you know not that I am acquainted with all that took place on the melancholy occasion. Gerald," he pursued, "forgive the apparent harshness of what I am about to observe—but was it generous—was it kind in you to incur the risk you did, when you must have known that your death would have entailed upon me an eternal grief? Was it worthy of yourself, moreover, to make the devoted follower of your fortunes, a sharer in the danger you so eagerly and wantonly courted!"

"Nay, my good brother," and Gerald made an attempt at levity, "you are indeed an unsparing monitor; but suppose I should offer in reply, that a spirit of enterprize was upon me on the occasion to which you allude, and that, fired by a desire to astonish you all with a bold feat, I had had resolved to do what no other had done before me, yet without apprehending the serious consequences which ensued—or even assuming the danger to have been so great."

"All this, Gerald, you might, yet would not say; because, in saying it, would have to charge yourself with a gross insincerity, and although you do not deem me worthy to share your confidence, I still have pleasure in knowing that my affection will not be repaid with deceit—however plausible the motives for its adoption may appear—by the substitution in short, of that which is not for that which is."

"A gross insincerity?" repeated Gerald, again slightly coloring.

"Yes, my brother—I say it not in anger, nor in reproach—but a gross insincerity it would certainly be. Alas, Gerald, your motives are but too well known to me. The danger you incurred was incurred wilfully, wantonly, and with a view to your own destruction."

Gerald started. The color had again fled from his sunken cheek, and he was ashy pale; "And *how* knew you this?" he *asked with a trembling* voice.

"Even, Gerald, as I know that you have been driven to seek in wine that upbearing against the secret grief which consumes you, which should be found alone in the fortitude of a strong mind, and the consciousness of an untainted honor. Oh, Gerald, had these been your supporters, you never would have steeped your reason so far in forgetfulness, as to have dared what you did on that eventful day. Good Heaven! how little did I ever expect to see the brother of my love degenerated so far as to border on the character of the drunkard and the suicide."

The quick, but sunken eyes of the sailor flashed fire; and he pressed his lips, and clenched his teeth together as one strongly attempting to restrain his indignation. It was but a momentary flashing of the chafed and bruised spirit.

"You probe me deeply, Henry," he said calmly, and in a voice of much melancholy. "These are severe expressions for a brother to use—but you are right—I did seek oblivion of my wretchedness in that whirlpool, as the only means of destroying the worm that feeds incessantly upon my heart; but Providence has willed it otherwise—and, moreover, I had not taken the danger of my faithful servant into the account. Had Sambo not saved me, I must have perished, for I made not the slightest effort to preserve myself. However it matters but little, the mere manner of one's death," he pursued with increased despondency. "It is easy for you, Henry, whose mind is at peace with itself and the world, to preach fortitude and resignation, but, felt you the burning flame which scorches my vitals, you would acknowledge the wide, wide difference between theory and practice."

Henry rose deeply agitated—he went to the door and secured the bolt, then returning, knelt at his brother's feet. Gerald had one hand covering his eyes from which, however, the tears forced themselves through his closed fingers. The other was seized and warmly pressed in his brother's grasp.

"*Gerald,*" he said in the most emphatic manner, "by *the love you* ever bore to our sainted parents, in whose

chamber of death I now appeal to your better feelings—by the friendship that has united our hearts from youth to manhood —by all and every tie of affection, let me implore you once more to confide this dreadful grief to me, that I may share it with you, and counsel you for your good. Oh, my brother, on my bended knees, do I solicit your confidence. Believe me no mean curiosity prompts my prayer. I would soothe, console, assist you—aye, even to the very sacrifice of life."

The feelings of the sailor were evidently touched, yet he uttered not a word. His hand still covered his face, and the tears seemed to flow even faster than before.

"Gerald," pursued his brother with bitterness; "I see with pain, that I have not your confidence, and I desist—yet answer me one question. From the faithful Sambo, as you must perceive, I have learnt all connected with your absence, and from him I have gained that, during your captivity, you were much with Miss Montgomerie, (he pronounced the name with an involuntary shuddering), all I ask, therefore, is whether your wretchedness proceeds from the rejection of your suit, or from any levity or inconstancy you may have found in her?"

Gerald raised his head from his supporting hand, and turned upon his brother a look, in which mortified pride predominated over an infinitude of conflicting emotions.

"Rejected, Henry, *my* suit rejected—oh, no! In supposing my grief to originate with her, you are correct, but imagine not it is because my suit is rejected—certainly not."

"Then," exclaimed Henry with generous emphasis, while he pressed the thin hand which he held more closely between his own, "Why not marry her?"

Gerald started.

"Yes, marry her," continued Henry; "marry her and be at peace. Oh! Gerald, you know not what sad agency I attached to that insidious American from the first moment of her landing on this shore—you know not how much I have disliked, *and still dislike* her—but what are these considerations

when my brother's happiness is at stake—Gerald, marry her—and be happy."

"Impossible," returned the sailor in a feeble voice, and again his head sank upon the open palm of his hand.

"Do you no longer love her then?" eagerly questioned the astonished youth.

Once more Gerald raised his head, and fixed his large, dim, eyes full upon those of his brother. "To madness!" he said, in a voice, and with a look that made Henry shudder. There was a moment of painful pause. The latter at length ventured to observe.

"You speak in riddles, Gerald. If you love this Miss Montgomerie to madness, and are, as you seem to intimate loved by her in return, why not, as I have urged, marry her?"

"Because," replied the sailor, turning paler than before, and almost gasping for breath," there is a condition attached to the possession of her hand."

"And that is?" pursued Henry inquiringly, after another long and painful pause.

"My secret," and Gerald pointed significantly to his breast.

"True," returned Henry, slightly coloring; "I had forgotten—but what condition, Gerald, (and here he spoke as if piqued at the abrupt manner in which his brother had concluded his half confidence), what condition, I ask, may a woman entitled to our respect, as well as to our love, propose, which should be held of more account than that severest of offences againt the Divine will—self murder—nay, look not thus surprised, for have you not admitted that you had guiltily attempted to throw away your life—to commit suicide in short—rather than comply with an earthly condition?"

"What if in this," returned Gerald, with a smile of bitterness, "I have preferred the lesser guilt to the greater?"

"*I can* understand no condition, my brother, a woman worthy *of your esteem* could impose, which should one moment

weigh in the same scale against the inexpiable crime of self destruction. But, really, all this mystery so startles and confounds me, that I know not what to think—what inference to draw."

"Henry," observed the sailor, with some show of impatience —" considering your promise not to urge it further, it seems to me you push the matter to an extremity."

The youth made no reply, but, raising himself from his knees, moved towards the door, which he again unbolted. He then walked to the window at the further end of the apartment.

Gerald saw that he was deeply pained ; and impatient, and angry with himself, he also rose and paced the room with hurried steps. At length he stopped, and putting one hand upon the shoulder of his brother, who stood gazing vacantly from the window, pointed with the other towards that part of the apartment in which both their parents had breathed their last.

" Henry, my kind, good, Henry," he said, with a voice faltering with emotion, " do you recollect the morning, when, on our return from school, we found our young holiday joy changed into heart-breaking and mourning by the sight of our dying mother ?"

" Remember it, Gerald ! aye, even as though it had been yesterday. Oh, my brother, little did I think at the moment, when, with hands closely clasped together, we sank, overcome with grief, upon our bended knees, to receive that mother's blessing, a day would ever arrive when the joy or sorrow of the one, should form no portion of the joy or sorrow of the other."

" It was there," pursued Gerald, and without noticing the interruption, " that we solemnly pledged ourselves to do the will and bidding of our father in all things."

" Even so, Gerald, I remember it well."

" And it was there," continued the sailor, with the emphasis of strong emotion, " that, during my unfortunate absence

from the death bed of our yet surviving parent, you gave a pledge for *both*, that no action of our lives should reflect dishonor on his unsullied name."

"I did. Both in your name and in my own, I gave the pledge, well knowing that, in that, I merely anticipated your desire."

"Most assuredly—what then would be your sensations were you to know that I had violated that sacred obligation?"

"Deep, poignant, ceaseless, regret, that my once noble and high spirited brother, should have been so lost to respect for his father's memory, and to himself." This was uttered, not without deep agitation.

"You are right, Henry," added Gerald mournfully; "better—far better—is it to die, than live on in the consciousness of having forfeited all claim to esteem.

The young soldier started as if a viper had stung him. "Gerald," he said eagerly, "you have not dishonored yourself. Oh no—tell me, my brother, that you have not."

"No," was the cold, repulsive answer, "although my peace of mind is fled," he pursued, rather more mildly, "my honor, thank heaven, remains as pure as when you first pledged yourself for its preservation."

"Thanks, my brother, for that. But can it really be possible, that the mysterious condition attached to Miss Montgomerie's love, involves the loss of honor?"

Gerald made no answer.

"And can *you* really be weak enough to entertain a passion for a woman, who would make the dishonoring of the fair fame of him she professes to love, the fearful price at which her affection is to be purchased?"

Gerald seemed to wince at the word "weak," which was rather emphatically pronounced, and looked displeased at the concluding part of the sentence.

"I said not that the condition attached to her *love*," he remarked, with the piqued expression of a wounded vanity;

"her affection is mine, I know, beyond her own power of control—the condition, relates not to her heart, but to her hand."

"Alas, my poor infatuated brother. Blinding indeed must be the delusions of passion, when a nature so sensitive and so honorable shrinks not from such a connexion. My only surprise is, that, with such a perversion of judgment, you have returned at all."

"No more of this Henry. It is not in man to control his destiny, and mine appears to be to love with a fervor that must bear me, ere long, to my grave. Of this, however, be assured—that, whatever my weakness, or infatuation, as you may be pleased to call it, *that* passion shall never be gratified at the expense of my honor. Deeply—madly as I doat upon her image, Miss Montgomerie and I have met for the last time."

Overcome by the emotion with which he had thus expressed himself, Gerald could not restrain a few burning tears that forced their way down his hollow cheeks. Henry caught eagerly at this indication of returning softness, and again essayed, in reference to the concluding declaration of his brother, to urge upon him the unworthiness of her who had thus cast her deadly spell upon his happiness. But Gerald could ill endure the slightest allusion to the subject.

"Henry," he said, "I have already told you that Miss Montgomerie and I have parted for ever; but not the less devotedly do I love her. If, therefore, you would not further wring a heart already half broken with affliction, oblige me by never making the slightest mention of her name in my presence—or ever adverting again to our conversation of this morning. I am sure Henry, you will not deny me this."

Henry offered no other reply than by throwing himself into the arms that were extended to receive him. The embrace of the brothers was long and fervent, and, although there was perhaps more of pain than pleasure, in their mutual sense of the causes which had led to it in the present instance—

still was it productive of a luxury the most heartfelt. It seemed to both as if the spirits of their departed parents hovered over, and blessed them in this indication of their returning affection, hallowing, with their invisible presence, a scene connected with the last admonitions from their dying lips. When they had thus given vent to their feelings, although the sense of unhappiness continued undiminished, their hearts experienced a sensible relief; and when they separated for the morning, in pursuit of their respective avocations, it was with a subdued manner on the part of Gerald, and a vague hope with Henry, that his brother's disease would eventually yield to various influences, and that other and happier days were yet in store for both.

CHAPTER VII.

MEANWHILE the preparations for the departure of the expedition for the Miami were rapidly completing. To the majority of the regular force of the two garrisons were added several companies of militia, and a considerable body of Indians, under Tecumseh—the two former portions of the force being destined to advance by water, the latter by land. The spring had been unusually early, and the whole of April remarkably warm; on some occasions sultry to oppressiveness —as for instance on the morning of the tempest. They were now in the first days of the last week of that month, and every where a quick and luxuriant vegetation had succeeded to the stubborn barrenness and monotony of winter. Not a vestige of that dense mass of ice which, three months previously, had borne them over lake and river, was now to be seen. The sun danced joyously and sportively on the golden wave, and where recently towered the rugged surface of the tiny iceberg, the still, calm, unbroken level of the mirroring lake was only visible. On the beach, just below the town, and on a line with the little fleet, that lay at anchor between the island and the main, were drawn up numerous batteaux, ready for the reception of the troops, while on the decks of two gun boats, that were moored a few yards without them, were to be seen the battering train and entrenching tools intended to accompany the expedition. Opposite to each batteau was kindled a fire, around which were grouped the *voyageurs* composing the crew, some dividing their salt pork or salt fish upon their bread, with a greasy clasped knife, and quenching the thirst excited by this with occasional libations from *tin cans, containing* a mixture of water and the poisonous

distillation of the country, miscalled whiskey. In other directions, those who had dined sat puffing the smoke from their dingy pipes, while again, they who had sufficiently luxuriated on the weed, might be seen sleeping, after the manner of the Indians, with their heads resting on the first rude pillow that offered itself, and their feet close upon the embers of the fire on which they had prepared their meal. The indolence of inactivity was more or less upon all, but it was the indolence consequent on previous exertion, and a want of further employment. The whole scene was characteristic of the peculiar manners of the French Canadian boatmen.

Since the morning of the long and partial explanation between the brothers, no further allusion had been made to the forbidden subject. Henry saw, with unfeigned satisfaction, that Gerald not only abstained from the false excitement to which he had hitherto had recourse, but that he apparently sought to rally against his dejection. It is true that whenever he chanced to surprise him alone, he observed him pale, thoughtful, and full of care, but, as he invariably endeavored to hide the feeling at his approach, he argued favorably even from the effort. Early on the day previous to that of the sailing of the expedition, Gerald asked leave for a visit of a few hours to Detroit, urging a desire to see the family of his uncle, who still remained quartered at that post, and whom he had not met since his return from captivity. This had been readily granted by the Commodore, in whom the change in the health and spirits of his young favorite had excited both surprise and concern, and who, anxious for his restoration, was ready to promote whatever might conduce to his comfort. He had even gone so far as to hint the propriety of his relinquishing his intention of accompanying the expedition, (which was likely to be attended with much privation and exposure to those engaged in it,) and suffering another officer to be substituted to his command, while he remained at home to recruit his health. But Gerald heard the *well meant* proposal with ill disguised impatience, and he re-

plied, with a burning cheek, that if his absence for a day could not be allowed without inconvenience to the service, he was ready to submit; but, as far as regarded his making one of the expedition, nothing short of a positive command should compel him to remain behind. Finding him thus obstinate, the Commodore good humouredly called him a silly, wilful, fellow, and bade him have his own way; however he felt confident that, if he accompanied the Miami expedition in his then state of health, he never would rerturn from it.

Gerald admitted it was probable enough he should not, but, although he deeply felt the kindness of his Commander's motive in wishing him to remain, he was not the less determined, since the matter was left to his own choice, to go where his duty led him. Then, promising to be back long before the hour fixed for sailing the ensuing day, he warmly pressed the cordially extended hand, and soon afterwards, accompanied by Sambo, whose skill as a rider was in no way inferior to his dexterity as a steersman, mounted a favorite horse, and was soon far on his road to Detroit.

Towards midnight of that day, two men were observed by the American tanner, to enter by the gate that led into the grounds of the cottage, and, after lingering for a few moments, near the graves to which tradition had attached so much of the marvellous, to disappear round the angle of the building into the court behind. Curiosity induced him to follow and watch their movements, and, although he could not refrain from turning his head at least a dozen times, as if expecting at each moment to encounter some dread inhabitant of the tomb, he at length contrived to place himself in the very position in which Gerald had formerly been a witness of the attempt at assassination. From the same window now flashed a strong light upon the court below, and by this the features of the officer and his servant were distinctly revealed to the astonished tanner, who, ignorant of their return, and scarcely knowing whether he gazed upon the living or the dead, *would have fled*, had he not, as he afterwards confessed,

been rooted by fear, and a species of fascination, to the spot. The appearance and actions of the parties indeed seemed to justify, not only the delusion, but the alarm of the worthy citizen. Both Gerald and Sambo were disguised in large dark cloaks, and as the light fell upon the thin person and pale, attenuated, sunken countenance of the former, he could scarcely persuade himself this was the living man, who a few months before, rich in beauty and in health, had questioned him of the very spot in which he now, under such strange circumstances, beheld him. Nor was the appearance of the negro more assuring. Filled with the terror that ever inspired him on approaching this scene of past horrors, his usually dark cheek wore the dingy paleness characteristic of death in one of his colour, while every muscle, stiff, set, contracted by superstitious fear, seemed to have lost all power of relaxation. The solemnity moreover of the manner of both, was in strict keeping with their personal appearance, so that it can scarcely be wondered that in a mind not the strongest nor the most free from a belief in the supernatural, a due quantum of awe and alarm should have been instilled. Fear, however, had not wholly subdued curiosity, and even while trembling to such a degree that he could scarcely keep his teeth from chattering, the tanner followed with eager eye the movements of those he knew not whether to look upon as ghosts or living beings. The room was exactly in the state in which we last described it, with this difference merely, that the table, on which the lamp and books had been placed now lay overturned, as if in the course of some violent scuffle, and its contents distributed over the floor. The bed still remained, in the same corner, unmade, and its covering tossed. It was evident no one had entered the apartment since the night of the attempted assassination.

The first act of Gerald, who bore the light, followed closely by Sambo, was to motion the latter to raise the fallen table. When this was done he placed his lamp upon it, and sink-

ing upon the foot of the bed, and covering his eyes with his hands, seemed for some moments utterly absorbed in bitter recollections. The negro, meanwhile, an apparent stranger to the scene, cast his eyes around him with the shrinking caution of one who finds himself in a position of danger, and fears to encounter some terrific sight, then, as if the effort was beyond his power, he drew the collar of his cloak over his face, and shuffling to get as near as possible to the bed as though in the act he came more immediately under the protection of him who sat upon it, awaited, in an attitude of statue-like immobility, the awakening of his master from his reverie.

Gerald at length withdrew his hands from his pallid face, on which the glare of the lamp rested forcibly, and, with a wild look and low, but imperative, voice, bade the old negro seat himself beside him still lower on the bed.

"Sambo," he inquired abruptly—"how old were you when the Indian massacre took place near this spot. You were then, I think I have heard it stated, the servant of Sir Everard Valletort?"

The old negro looked aghast. It was long since direct allusion had been made to his unfortunate master or the events of that period. Questioned in such a spot, and at such an hour, he could not repress the feeling of terror conjured up by the allusion. Scarcely daring to exceed a whisper, he answered.

"Oh Massa Geral, for Hebben's sake no talkee dat. It berry long time ago, and break poor nigger heart to tink ob it——"

"But I insist on knowing," returned Gerald loudly and peremptorily; "were you old enough to recollect the curse that poor heart-broken woman, Ellen Halloway, uttered on all our race, and if so what was it?"

"No, Massa Geral, I no sabby dat. Sambo den only piccaninny and Sir Ebbered make him top in e fort—oh *berry bad times* dat, Massa Geral. Poor Frank Hallaboy e

shot fust, because e let he grand fadder out ob e fort, and den ebery ting go bad—berry bad indeed."

"But the curse of Ellen Halloway, Sambo—you must have heard of it surely—even if you were not present at the utterance. Did she not," he continued, finding that the other replied not: "Did she not pray that the blood of my great grand father's children might be spilt on the very spot that had been moistened with that of her ill fated husband—and, that if any of the race should survive, it might be only with a view to their perishing in some unnatural and horrible manner. Was not this the case?"

"Oh yes, Massa Geral, berry bad tongue Ellen, affir he lose he husband—but, poor ting, he half mad and no sabby what he say. He time to start for he gun boat, Massa Geral."

The part Sambo had sustained in this short dialogue was a forced one. He had answered almost mechanically, and not altogether without embarrassment, the few queries that were put to him. Nay, so far was he governed by surrounding local influences, that the anguish he would, under other circumstances, have experienced, at this raking up of recollections he so sedulously avoided, was lost in terror, produced by his near and midnight propinquity to the fatal theatre of death. His only idea now was to leave the spot as quickly as he could.

Gerald had again covered his face with his hands, and appeared to be laboring under strong agitation of mind. At length he started abruptly up, and seizing the light, held it forward, stooping over the bed, as if gazing fixedly on some object within.

"No," he said with vehemence, "it shall never be. That part of the malediction, at least, shall *not* be accomplished. For once shall the curse of the innocent be unheeded."

The strange action and words of the excited officer, by no means contributed to allay the nervousness of the brave but superstitious negro. He had approached as near as he could to Gerald, without actually touching him; but when he re-

marked his abrupt movement, and heard the sudden outburst of feeling which accompanied it, he half fancied he was apostrophizing some spirit visible only to himself, and shocked and terrified at this idea, he turned away his head.

Sambo's alarm was not to terminate here. Scarcely had he bent his glance upon the window when he beheld two glaring eyes, magnified by his fear into thrice their natural size, fixed intently on that part of the room in which they stood. He attempted to cry out, but the sound was stifled in his throat, and he sank upon his knees, holding up his hands in an attitude of prayer—his teeth chattering, and his eyes fascinated by those which had produced in him this paroxysm of terror. Presently he thought he saw a mouth open, and a row of large and ragged teeth display themselves in a grin of derision. With a desperate effort he broke the spell that seemed to enchain every faculty, and called piteously and imploringly on the name of Gerald. The officer, who had continued gazing on the untenanted bed in deep abstraction, and seeming forgetfulness of all surrounding objects, turned hastily round, and was much concerned to observe the terrified expression of the old man's countenance.—Following the direction of his fixed gaze, he looked towards the window for a solution of the cause. At that moment a noise was heard without, as of a falling body. Gerald sprang towards the window, and hastily lifting it, thrust the lamp through; but nothing was visible, neither was there sound of footsteps to be heard.

Before daybreak on the following morning, the poor old negro, whom no living danger could daunt, had given but too alarming evidence that his reason was utterly alienated. His ravings were wild and fearful, and nothing could remove from his mind that the face he had beheld was that of the once terrible Wacousta—the same face which had presented itself, under such extraordinary circumstances, at the window of the Canadian's hut, on the night of the departure of his master, Sir Everard Valletort, and Captain De Haldimar,

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for Michillimackinac in 1763. Nay, so rooted was this belief, that, with the fervor of that zeal which had governed his whole life and conduct towards each succeeding generation of the family, he prayed and obtained, during a momentary gleam of reason, the promise of the much shocked Gerald, that he would never again set foot within the precincts of those fatal grounds.

Inexpressibly grieved as Gerald was at this sad and unexpected termination to his adventure, he had no time to linger near his unfortunate servant. The expedition was to set out in a few hours, and he had too completely bent his mind upon accompanying it to incur the slightest chance of a disappointment. Leaving the faithful and unfortunate creature to the care of his uncle's family, by every member of whom he was scarcely less loved than by himself, he took the ferry to the opposite shore within an hour after day break, and made such speed that, when Henry came down to breakfast he found, to his surprise, his brother already there.

During his ride, Gerald had had leisure to reflect on the events of the preceding night, and bitterly did he regret having yielded to a curiosity which had cost the unfortunate Sambo so much. He judged correctly that they had been followed in their nocturnal excursion, and that it was the face of some prying visitant which Sambo's superstitious dread had transformed into a hideous vision of the past. He recalled the insuperable aversion the old man had ever entertained to approach or even make mention of the spot, and greatly did he blame himself for having persisted in offering a violence to his nature, the extent of which had been made so fearfully obvious. It brought no consolation to him to reflect that the spot itself contained nought that should have produced so alarming an effect on a mind properly constituted. He felt that, knowing his weakness as he did, he ought not to have trifled with it, and could not deny to himself, that in enforcing his *attendance*, (with a view to obtain information on several points *connected with* the past), he had been indirectly the destroyer

of his reason. There had been a season when the unhappy sailor would have felt a sorrow even deeper than he did, but Gerald was indeed an altered being—too much rapt in himself to give heed to others.

The painful nature of his reflections, added to the fatigue he had undergone, had given to his countenance a more than usually haggard expression. Henry remarked it and inquired the cause, when his brother, in a few brief sentences, explained all that had occurred during his absence. Full of affection as he was for the old man, and utterly unprepared for such a communication, Henry could not avoid expressing deep vexation that his brother, aware as he was of the peculiar weakness of their aged friend, should have been inconsiderate enough to have drawn him thither. Gerald felt the reproof to be just, and for that very reason grew piqued under it. Shocked as he was at the condition of Sambo, Henry was even more distressed at witnessing the apparent apathy of his brother for the fate of one, who had not merely saved his life on a recent occasion, but had evinced a devotedness—a love for him—in every circumstance of life, which seldom had had their parallel in the annals of human servitude. It was in vain that he endeavored to follow the example of Gerald, who, having seated himself at the breakfast table, was silently appeasing an appetite such as he had not exhibited since his return. Incapable of swallowing his food, Henry paced up and down the room, violently agitated and sick at heart. It seemed to him as if Sambo had been a sort of connecting link between themselves and the departed parents; and now that he was suddenly and fearfully afflicted, he thought he could see in the vista of futurity a long train of evils that threw their shadows before, and portended the consummation of some unknown, unseen affliction; having its origin in the incomprehensible alienation of his brother's heart from the things of his early love.

While he was yet indulging in these painful thoughts, the firing of a *gun from* the harbour—the signal for the embarka-

tion of the troops—brought both Gerald and himself to a sense of other considerations. The latter was the first to quit the house. "Henry," he said with much emotion, "God bless you. It is possible that, as our service lies in different lines, we shall see but little of each other during this expedition—Of one thing however be assured—that although I am an unhappy man I am any thing but dead to feeling—Henry," he continued pressing his hand with warmth, "think not unkindly hereafter of your poor brother Gerald." A long embrace, in which each, although in silence, seemed to blend heart with heart, ensued, and both greatly relieved, as they always were after this generous expansion of their feelings, separated forthwith whither their respective duties summoned them.

CHAPTER VIII.

SELDOM has there been witnessed a more romantic or picturesque sight than that presented by an expedition of batteaux moving across one of the Canadian lakes, during a season of profound calm. The uniform and steady pull of the crew, directed in their time by the wild chaunt of the steersman, with whom they ever and anon join in full chorus —the measured plash of the oars into the calm surface of the water—the joyous laugh and rude, but witty, jest of the more youthful and buoyant of the soldiery, from whom, at such moments, although in presence of their officers, the trammels of restraint are partially removed—all these, added to the inspiriting sight of their gay scarlet uniforms, and the dancing of the sunbeams upon their polished arms, have a tendency to call up impressions of a wild interest, tempered only by the recollection that many of those who move gaily on, as if to a festival—bright in hope as though the season of existence were to last for ever, may never more set eye upon the scenes they are fast quitting, with the joyousness produced by the natural thirst of the human heart for adventure, and a love of change.

On the second day of its departure from Amhertsburg, the expedition, preceded by the gun boats, entered the narrow river of the Miami, and, the woods on either shore being scoured by the Indians, gained without opposition the point of debarkation. Batteries having, under great difficulties, been erected on the right bank, immediately opposite to, and about six hundred yards from the American fort, which had been recently and hurriedly constructed, a heavy and destructive fire *was,* on the morning of the third day, opened from

them, supported by the gun boats, one of which, commanded by Gerald Grantham, had advanced so close to the enemy's position as to have diverted upon herself the fire which would else have been directed to the demolition of a British battery, hastily thrown up on the left bank. The daring manifested by the gallant sailor was subject of surprise and admiration at once to friends and foes, and yet, although his boat lay moored within musket shot of the defences, he sustained but trifling loss. The very recklessness and boldness of his advance had been the means of his preservation, for, as almost all the shots from the battery flew over him, it was evident he owed his safety to the difficulty the Americans found in depressing their guns sufficiently to bear advantageously upon the boat, which, if anchored fifty yards beyond, they might have blown out of the water.

The limits of our story will not admit of a further detail of the operations of this siege. Suffice it that, notwithstanding the entire defeat and capture of a strong corps of the enemy, who were advancing to relieve the place, in the course of which a handful of British troops rendered themselves as conspicuous for valour, as the noble Tecumseh did for valour and clemency united, the siege, (a second time attempted,) was, after a final but fruitless attempt to decoy the enemy from his defences, abandoned as hopeless, and the expedition re-embarked and directed against Fort Sandusky, a post of the Americans, situate on the river of that name, and running also into Lake Erie.

Here, once more, was the British Artillery landed, while, under a heavy fire from the fort, the troops advanced within range, to take possession of an eminence whereon it was intended to erect the batteries. Two days were passed in incessant cannnonading, but, as at the Miami, without making the slightest impression on the green wood, that opened to receive each ball and closed unshaken the moment afterwards. Finding all idea of a practicable breach *hopeless, it was* at length resolved that an attempt at assault

should be made, and, with this view, the troops were, on the afternoon of the second day, ordered to hold themselves in immediate readiness.

In consequence of the shallowness of the river, it had been found necessary to moor the gun boats at a point considerably below, and out of sight of the fort. Gerald Grantham had obtained permission to leave his command, and take charge of one of the batteries, which, however, he relinquished on the day of the assault, having successfully petitioned to be suffered to join the attack as a volunteer. In the dress of a grenadier soldier, disabled during the siege, he now joined the party of animated officers, who, delighted at the prospect of being brought once more in close contact with their enemies, after so many wearying days of inaction, were seated at a rude but plentiful repast in Captain Cranstoun's tent, and indulging in remarks which, although often uttered without aim or ill-nature, are as often but too bitter subject of after self-reproach to those who have uttered them. Of those who had originally set out on the expedition, the only officer of the —— Regiment absent was Henry Grantham, who, having been slightly wounded at the Miami, had, much against his inclination, been ordered back to Amhertsburgh, in charge of the sick and wounded of the detachment, and this so suddenly, that he had not had an opportunity of taking leave of his brother.

"Ha! Gerald, my fine fellow," exclaimed Captain Molineux, as the youth now joined their circle, so you have clapped on the true harness at last. I always said that your figure became a red jacket a devilish deal better than a blue. But what new freak is this? Had you not a close enough berth to Jonathan in the Miami, without running the risk of a broken head with us today in his trenches?"

"No such luck is there in store for my juniors, I fancy," replied Grantham, swallowing off a goblet of wine, which had been presented to him—"but if I do fall, it will be in *good company*. Although the American seems to lie

quietly enough within his defences, there is that about him which promises us rather a hot reception."

"So much the better," said Villiers; "there will be broken heads for some of us—who do you think we have booked for a place to the other world?"

Gerald made no answer, but his look and manner implied that he understood himself to be the party thus favored.

"Not so," returned Villiers, "we can't afford to spare you yet besides the death of a blue jacket can in no way benefit us. What's the use of 'a bloody war and a sickly season,' that standard toast at every West India mess, if the juniors are to go off and not the seniors—Cranstoun's the man we've booked."

"Captain Cranstoun, I have the honor of wishing you a safe passage, and speedy promotion in Heaven," said Middlemore, draining off his glass. "Devilish good port this of yours. By the bye, as you have a better port in view, you cannot do better than assign over what is left of this to me."

"Thonk ye, Mr. Meeddlemore," retorted Cranstoun drily, yet good humouredly; "yeet as ye're to be attoched to my deveesion y'ell perhops roon jeest the same reesk, and as it may be that y'ell not want more wine than we've taken the day, any moore than mysel', a pleedge ye, in retoorn, a safe possage to Heeven, when a troost ye will be joodged for better qualities than ye poossess as a poonster."

"What," asked Gerald, with an unfeigned surprise, when the laugh against Middlemore had subsided; "and is it really in his own wine that you have all thus been courteously pledging Captain Cranstoun's death?"

"Even so," said Middlemore, rallying and returning to the attack, "he invited us all to lunch in his tent, and how could we better repay him for opening his hampers, than by returning his *spirit scot-free* and *unhampered* to Heaven."

"Oh, oh, oh," ejaculated St. Clair, stopping his ears and throwing up his eyes; "surely, Middlemore, if you are not *shot this day, it* must be that you were born to be hanged—

no man can perpetrate so horrible a pun, and expect to live."

"I'm hanged if I am then," returned the other; "but, talking of being shot—is a there another shot in the locker, Cranstoun—another bottle of port?"

"The shot that is reserved for you, will bring you acquainted with another locker than Cranstoun's I suspect," said Villiers; "one Mr. David Jones' locker—hit there eh?"

The low roll of a muffled drum, suddenly recalled the party from their trifling to considerations of a graver interest. It was the signal for forming the columns of attack. In a moment the tone—the air of ribaldry was exchanged for a seriousness that befitted the occasion, and it seemed as if a momentary reproach passed over the minds of those who had most amused themselves at the expense of Cranstoun, for each, as he quitted the tent, gave his extended hand to his host, who pressed it in a manner to show all was forgiven.

The English batteries had been constructed on the skirt of the wood surrounding the fort, from which latter they were separated by a meadow covered with long grass, about six hundred yards across at the narrowest point. Behind these the columns of attack, three in number, were now rapidly and silently formed. To that commanded by Captain Cranstoun, on the extreme left, and intended to assault the fort at the strongest point, Gerald Grantham had attached himself, in the simple dress, as we have observed, of a private soldier, and armed with a common musket. In passing, with the former officer, to take his position in front of the column, he was struck by the utter want of means for executing, with success, the duty assigned to the several divisions. Each column was provided with a certain number of axemen, selected to act as pioneers; but not one of the necessary implements was in a condition to be used; neither had a single fascine or ladder been provided, although it was well known a deep ditch remained to be passed before the axes, *inefficient as they* were, could be brought into use.

"Sooch," said Captain Cranstoun, with a sneer of much bitterness, and pointing to the blunted and useless implements, "are the peetiful theengs on which hong the lives of our brave fallows. Nae doot the next dispotches will say a great deal aboot the eexcellent arrangements for attock; but if ye do not fall, Geerald, a hope ye'll make a proper repreesentation of the affair. As ye belong to the other seervice, there's leetle fear the Geeneral can hurt your promotion for jeest speaking the truth. A Geeneral indeed! who'll say Fortune is not bleind to make a Geeneral of sooch as he?

It was not an usual thing for Cranstoun to express himself thus in regard to his superiors; but he was really vexed at the idea of the sacrifice of human life that must attend this wantonness of neglect, and imbecility of arrangement. He had, moreover, taken wine enough, not in any way to intoxicate, but sufficient to thaw his habitual caution and reserve. Fearless as his sword, he cared not for his own life; but, although a strict officer, he was ever attentive to the interests of his men, who, in their turn, admired him for his cool, unflinching courage, and would have dared any thing, under the direction of their Captain.

It was evident that the contempt of the sailor for the capacity of the leader, to whom it was well known all the minute arrangements were submitted, was not one whit inferior to what was entertained by the brave and honest Cranstoun. He, however, merely answered, as they both assumed their places in front, and with the air of one utterly indifferent to these disadvantages.

"No matter, Cranstoun, the greater the obstacles we have to contend against, the more glorious will be our victory. Where you lead, however, we shall not be long in following."

"Hem! since it is to be a game of follow-my-leader," said Middlemore, who now joined them, "I must not be far behind. A month's pay with either of you I reach the *stockade* first."

"Doone, Meeddlemore, doone," eagerly replied Cranstoun, and they joined hands in confirmation of the bet.

This conversation had taken place during the intervals occupied by the movements of the right and centre columns along the skirt of the wood, to equidistant points in the half circle embraced in the plan of attack. A single blast of the bugle now announced that the furthermost had reached its place of destination, when suddenly a gun—the first fired since noon from the English batteries—gave the signal for which all were now prepared.

In the next minute the heads of the several columns debouched from the wood, and, the whole advancing in double quick time, with their arms at the trail, moved across the meadow in the several directions assigned them. The space to be traversed by Captain Cranstoun's division was considerably the shortest of the three; but, on the other hand, he was opposed to that part of the enemy's defences where there was the least cover afforded to an assailing force. Meanwhile there was an utter repose in the fort, which for some moments induced the belief that the Americans were preparing to surrender their trust without a struggle, and loud yells from the Indians, who, from their cover in the rear, watched the progress of the troops with admiration and surprise, were pealed forth as if in encouragement to the latter to proceed. But the American Commander had planned his defence with skill. No sooner had the several columns got within half musket shot, than a tremendous fire of musketry and rifles was opened upon them from two distinct faces of the stockade. Captain Cranstoun's division, being the nearest, was the first attacked, and suffered considerably without attempting to return a shot. At the first discharge, the two leading sergeants, and many of the men, were knocked down; but neither Cranstoun, nor Middlemore, nor Grantham, were touched.

"Foorward men, foorward," shouted the former, brandish-

ing his sword, and dashing down a deep ravine, that separated them from the trenches.

"On, my gallant fellows, on!—the left column for ever," cried Middlemore, imitating the example of his Captain, and, in his eagerness to reach the ditch first, leaving his men to follow as they could.

Few of these, however, needed the injunction. Although galled by the severe fire of the enemy, they followed their leaders down the ravine with a steadiness worthy of a better result; then, climbing up the opposite ascent, under a shower of bullets, yet without pulling a trigger themselves, made for the ditch their officer had already gained.

Cranstoun, still continuing in advance, was the first who arrived on the brink. For a moment he paused, as if uncertain what course to pursue, then, seeing Middlemore close behind him, he leaped in, and striking a blow of his sabre upon the stockade, called loudly upon the axemen to follow. While he was yet shouting, a ball from a loop-hole, not three feet above his head, entered his brain, and he fell dead across the trench.

"Ha! well have you won your wager, my noble Captain!" exclaimed Middlemore, putting his hand to his chest, and staggering from the effect of a shot he had that instant received. "You are indeed the *better* man," (he continued excited beyond his usual calm by the circumstances in which he found himself placed, yet unable to resist his dominating propensity, even at such a moment,) "and deserve the palm of honor this day. Forward, men, forward: —axemen do your duty. Down with the stockade, my lads, and give them a bellyfull of steel."

Scarcely had he spoken, when a second discharge from the same wall-piece that had killed Cranstoun passed through his throat. "Forward," he again but more faintly shouted, with the gurgling tone of suffocation peculiar to a wound in *that region*, then, falling headlong into the ditch, was in the

next instant trodden under by the advance of the column who rushed forward, though fruitlessly, to avenge the deaths of their officers.

All was now confusion, noise, and carnage. Obeying the command of their leader, the axemen had sprung into the ditch, and, with efforts nerved by desperation, applied themselves vigorously to the task allotted them. But as well might they have attempted to raze the foundation of the globe itself. Incapable from their bluntness of making the slightest impression on the obstinate wood, the iron at each stroke rebounded off, leaving to the eye no vestige of where it had rested. Filled with disappointment and rage, the brave and unfortunate fellows dashed the useless metal to the earth, and endeavored to escape from the ditch back into the ravine, where, at least, there was a prospect of supplying themselves with more serviceable weapons from among their slain comrades; but the ditch was deep and slimy and the difficulty of ascent great. Before they could accomplish it, the Americans opened a fire from a bastion, the guns of which, loaded with slugs and musket balls, raked the trench from end to end, and swept away all that came within its range. This was the first check given to the division of the unfortunate Cranstoun. Many of the leading sections had leaped, regardless of all obstacles, into the trench, with a view of avenging their slaughtered officers; but these, like the axemen, had been carried away by the discharges from the bastion and the incessant fire poured upon them from the loop-holes of the stockade. Despairing of success, without fascines to fill up the ditch, or a ladder to scale the picketing that afforded cover to their enemies, there was no alternative but to remain and be cut down to a man, where they stood, or to retire into the brushwood that lined the ravine. The latter was finally adopted; but not before one third of the column had paid the penalty of their own daring, and what the brave Cranstoun had *sneeringly termed* the "General's excellent arrangements."

with their lives. The firing at this time had now almost wholly ceased between the enemy and the columns on the right and centre, neither of which had penetrated beyond the ravine, and at a late hour in the evening the whole were drawn off.

Meanwhile, steady at his post at the head of the division, Gerald Grantham had continued to act with the men as though he had been one of themselves. During the whole course of the advance, he neither joined in the cheers of the officers, nor uttered word of encouragement to those who followed. But in his manner there was remarked a quietness of determination, a sullen disregard of danger, that seemed to denote some deeper rooted purpose than the mere desire of personal distinction. His ambition appeared to consist, not in being the first to reach or scale the fort, but in placing himself wherever the balls of the enemy flew thickest. There was no enthusiasm in his mien, no excitement in his eye; neither had his step the buoyancy that marks the young heart wedded to valorous achievement, but was, on the contrary, heavy, measured, yet firm. His whole manner and actions, in short, as reported to his brother on the return of the expedition by those who had been near him throughout the affair, was that of a man who courts not victory but death. Planted on the brow of the ditch, at the moment when Middlemore fell, he had deliberately discharged his musket into the loop-hole whence the shot had been fired; but although, as he seemed to expect, the next instant brought several barrels to bear upon himself, not one of these had taken effect. A moment after and he was in the ditch, followed by some twenty or thirty of the leading men of the column, and advancing towards the bastion, then preparing to vomit forth its fire upon the devoted axemen. Even here, Fate, or Destiny, or whatever power it be that wills the nature of the end of man, turned aside the death with which he already seemed to grapple. At the very moment when the flash rose from the havoc-dealing gun, he

chanced to stumble over the dead body of a soldier, and fell flat upon his face. Scarcely had he touched the ground when he was again upon his feet; but even in that short space of time he alone, of those who had entered the ditch, had been left unscathed. Before him came bellying along the damp trench, the dense smoke from the fatal bastion, as it were a funeral shroud for its victims; and behind him were to be seen the mangled and distorted forms of his companions, some dead, others writhing in acute agony, and filling the air with shrieks, and groans, and prayers for water wherewith to soothe their burning lips, that mingled fearfully, yet characteristically, with the unsubdued roar of small arms.

It was now, for the first time, that Gerald evinced any thing like excitement, but it was the excitement of bitter disappointment. He saw those to whom the preservation of life would have been a blessing, cut down and slaughtered; while he, whose object it was to lay it down for ever, was, by some strange fatality, wholly exempt.

The reflections that passed with lightning quickness through his mind, only served to stimulate his determination the more. Scarcely had the smoke which had hitherto kept him concealed from the battery, passed beyond him, when, rushing forward, and shouting—"To the bastion, men—to the bastion!" he planted himself in front of the gun, and not three yards from its muzzle. Prevented by the dense smoke that choked up the trench, from ascertaining the extent of execution produced by their discharge, the American artillerymen, who had again loaded, were once more on the alert and preparing to repeat it. Already was the match in the act of descending, which would have blown the unfortunate Gerald to atoms, when suddenly an officer, whose uniform bespoke him to be of some rank, and to whose quick eye it was apparent the rash assailant was utterly unsupported, sprang upon the bastion, and, dashing the fuze from the hand of the gunner, commanded that a small sally,

port, which opened into the trench a few yards beyond the point where he stood, should be opened, and the brave soldier taken prisoner without harm. So prompt was the execution of this order, that, before Gerald could succeed in clambering up the ditch which, with the instinctive dread of captivity, he attempted, he was seized by half a dozen long legged backwoodsmen, and, by these, borne hurriedly back through the sally-port which was again closed.

CHAPTER IX.

DEFEATED at every point and with great loss, the British columns had retired into the bed of the ravine, where, shielded from the fire of the Americans, they lay several hours shivering with cold and ankle deep in mud and water; yet consoling themselves with the hope that the renewal of the assault, under cover of the coming darkness, would be attended with a happier issue. But the gallant General, who appeared in the outset to have intended they should make picks of their bayonets, and scaling-ladders of each others bodies, now that a mound sufficient for the latter purpose could be raised of the slain, had altered his mind, and alarmed, and mayhap conscience stricken at the profuse and unnecessary sacrifice of human life which had resulted from the first wanton attack, adopted the resolution of withdrawing his troops. This was at length finally effected, and without further loss.

Fully impressed with the belief that the assailants would not be permitted to forego the advantage they still possessed in their near contiguity to the works, without another attempt at escalade, the Americans had continued calmly at their posts; with what confidence in the nature of their defences, and what positive freedom from danger, may be inferred from the fact of their having lost but one man throughout the whole affair, and that one killed immediately through the loop-hole by the shot that avenged the death of poor Middlemore. When at a late hour they found that the columns were again in movement, they could scarcely persuade themselves they were not changing their points of attack. A very few minutes however sufficed to show their

error, for in the indistinct light of a new moon, the British troops were to be seen ascending the opposite face of the ravine and in full retreat. Too well satisfied with the successful nature of their defence, the Americans made no attempt to follow, but contented themselves with pouring in a parting volley, which however the obscurity rendered ineffectual. Soon afterwards the sally-port was again opened, and such of the unfortunates as yet lingered alive in the trenches were brought in, and every attention the place could afford paid to their necessities.

An advanced hour of the night brought most of the American officers together in their rude mess-room, where the occurrences of the day were discussed with an enthusiasm of satisfaction natural to the occasion. Each congratulated each on the unexpected success, but commendation was more than usually loud in favor of their leader, to whose coolness and judgment, in reserving his fire until the approach of the enemy within pistol shot, was to be attributed the severe loss and consequent check they had sustained.

Next became the topic of eulogium the gallantry of those who had been worsted in all but their honor, and all spoke with admiration of the devotedness of the two unfortunate officers who had perished in the trenches—a subject which, in turn, led to a recollection of the brave soldier who had survived the sweeping discharge from the bastion, and who had been so opportunely saved from destruction by the Commandant himself.

"Captain Jackson," said that officer, addressing one of the few who wore the regular uniform of the United States' army, "I should like much to converse with this man, in whom I confess, as in some degree the preserver of his life, I feel an interest. Moreover, as the only uninjured among our prisoners, he is the one most calculated to give us information in regard to the actual force of those whom we have this day had the good fortune to defeat, as well as of the ultimate destination of the British General. Notes of both

these important particulars, if I can possibly obtain them, I wish to make in a despatch of which I intend you to be the bearer."

The Aid-de-Camp, for in that capacity was he attached to the person of Colonel Forrester, immediately quitted the room, and presently afterwards returned ushering in the prisoner.

Although Gerald was dressed, as we have said, in the uniform of the private grenadier, there was that about him which, in defiance of a person covered from head to foot with the slimy mud of the trenches, and a mouth black as ink with powder from the cartridges he had bitten, at once betrayed him for something more than he appeared.

There was a pause for some moments after he entered. At length Colonel Forrester inquired, in a voice strongly marked by surprise :—

"May I ask, sir, what rank you hold in the British army ?"

"But that I have unfortunately suffered more from your mud than your fire," replied Gerald coolly, and with undisguised bitterness of manner, "the question would at once be answered by a reference to my uniform."

"I understand you, sir; you would have me to infer you are what your dress, and your dress alone, denotes—a private soldier ?"

Gerald made no answer.

"Your name, soldier ?"

"My name!"

"Yes; your name. One possessed of the gallantry we witnessed this day cannot be altogether without a name."

The pale cheek of Gerald was slightly tinged. With all his grief, he still was man. The indirect praise lingered a moment at his heart, then passed off with the slight blush that as momentarily dyed his cheek.

"My name, sir, is a humble one, and little worthy to be classed with those who have this day written theirs in the

page of honor with their heart's blood. I am called Gerald Grantham."

"Gerald Grantham!" repeated the Commandant, musingly, as though endeavoring to bring back the recollection of such a name.

The prisoner looked at him stedfastly in return, yet without speaking.

"Is there another of your name in the British squadron?" continued Colonel Forrester, fixing his eye full upon his prisoner.

"There are many in the British squadron whose names are unknown to me," replied Gerald, evasively, and faintly coloring.

"Nay," said Colonel Forrester, "that subterfuge more than any thing betrays you. Though not answered, I am satisfied. How we are to account for seeing a gallant sailor attacking us in our trenches, in the humble garb of a private soldier, and so out of his own element, I cannot understand; but the name of Gerald Grantham, coupled with your manner and appearance, assures us we are making personal acquaintance with one to whose deeds we are not strangers. Gentlemen," addressing his officers, "this is the Lieutenant Grantham, whose vessel was captured last autumn at Buffalo, and of whose gallant defence, my cousin, Captain Edward Forrester, has spoken so highly. Lieutenant Grantham," he pursued, advancing, and offering his hand, "when I had the happiness to save your life this day, by dashing aside the fuze that would have been the agent in your destruction, I saw in you but the brave and humble soldier, whom it were disgrace not to have spared for so much noble daring. Judge how great must be my satisfaction to know that I have been the means of preserving, to his family and country, one whose name stands so high even in the consideration of his enemies.

Poor Gerald! how bitter and conflicting must have been his feelings at that moment. On the one side, touched by

the highest evidences of esteem a brave and generous enemy could proffer—on the other, annoyed beyond expression at the recollection of an interposition which had thwarted him in his fondest, dearest hope—that of losing, at the cannon's mouth, the life he loathed. What had been done in mercy and noble forbearance, was to him the direst punishment that could be inflicted :—yet how was it possible to deny gratitude for the motive which had impelled his preservation, or fail in acknowledgment of the appreciation in which he thus found himself personally held.

" It would be idle, Colonel Forrester," he said, taking the proffered hand, " after the manner in which you have expressed yourself, to deny that I am the officer to whom you allude. I feel deeply these marks of your regard, although I cannot but consider any little merit that may attach to me very much overrated by them. My appearance in this dress, perhaps requires some explanation. Prevented by the shallowness of the river from co-operating with the army in my gun-boat, and tired of doing nothing, I had solicited and obtained permission to become one of the storming party in the quality of volunteer, which of necessity induced the garb in which you now behold me. You know the rest."

" And yet, Colonel," said a surly-looking backwoodsman, who sat with one hand thrust into the bosom of a hunting frock, and the other playing with the richly ornamented hilt of a dagger, while a round hat, surmounted by a huge cockade, was perched knowingly over his left ear, covering, or rather shadowing, little more than one fourth of his head—" I reckon as how this here sort of thing comes within the spy act. Here's a commissioned officer of King George, taken not only in our lines, but in our very trenches in the disguise of a private soger. What say you, Captain Buckhorn ?" turning to one somewhat younger and less uncouth, who sat next him habited in a similar manner. " Don't you think it comes within the spy act ?"

Captain Buckhorn, however, not choosing to hazard an opinion on the subject, merely shrugged his shoulders, puffed his cigar, and looked at the Colonel as if he expected him to decide the question.

"As I am a true Tennessee man, bred and born, Major Killdeer," said the Aid-de-Camp Jackson, "I can't see how that can lie. To come within the spy act, a man must be in plain clothes, or in the uniform of his enemy. Now, Liftenant Grantham, I take it, comes in the British uniform, and what signifies a whistle if he wears gold lace or cotton tape, provided it be stuck upon a scarlet coat, and that in the broad face of day, with arms in his hand,—aye, and a devil of a desperation to make good use of them too"—he added, with a good naturedly malicious leer of the eye towards the subject of his defence.

"At all events, in my conceit, it's an attempt to undervally himself," pursued the tenacious Kentuckian Major. "Suppose his name warn't known as it is, he'd have passed for a private soger, and would have been exchanged for one, without our being any the wiser; whereby the United States' service, I calculate, would have lost an officer in the balance of account."

"Although there cannot be the slightest difficulty," observed Colonel Forrester, "in determining on the doubt first started by you, Major Killdeer, I confess, that what you have now suggested involves a question of some delicacy. In the spirit, although not altogether in the letter, of your suggestion, I agree; so much so, Mr. Grantham," he added, turning to Gerald, "that in violence to the inclination I should otherwise have felt to send you back to your lines, on parole of honor, I shall be compelled to detain you until the pleasure of my government be known as to the actual rank in which you are to be looked upon. I should say that, taken in arms as a combatant without rank, we have no right to know you as any thing else; but as I may *be in* error, I am sure you will see how utterly impossible it

is for me to take any such responsibility upon myself, especially after the difficulty you have just heard started."

Gerald, who had listened to this discussion with some astonishment, was not sorry to find the manner of its termination. In the outset he had not been without alarm that the hero of one hour might be looked upon and hanged as the spy of the next; and tired as he was of life, much as he longed to lay it down, his neck had too invincible a repugnance to any thing like contact with a cord to render him ambitious of closing his existence in that way. He was not at all sorry, therefore, when he found the surly looking Major Killdeer wholly unsupported in his sweeping estimate of what he called the "spy act." The gentlemanly manner of Colonel Forrester, forming as it did so decided a contrast with the unpolished—even rude frankness of his second in command, was not without soothing influence upon his mind, and to his last observation he replied, as he really felt, that any change in his views as to his disposal could in no way effect him, since it was a matter of total indifference whether he returned to Amherstburg, or was detained where he was. In neither case could he actively rejoin the service until duly exchanged, and this was the only object embraced in any desire he might entertain of the kind.

"Still," added the Colonel, "although I may not suffer you to return yet into Canada, I can see no objection to according you the privilege of parole of honor, without at all involving the after question of whether you are to be considered as the soldier or the officer. From this moment therefore, Mr. Grantham, you will consider yourself a prisoner at large within the fort—or, should you prefer journeying into the interior, to sharing the privations and the dullness inseparable from our isolated position, you are at liberty to accompany Captain Jackson, my Aid-de-Camp, who will leave this within thirty-six hours, charged with dispatches for the Governor of Kentucky."

Gerald had already acknowledged to himself that, if any

thing could add to his wretchedness, it would he a compulsory residence in a place not only destitute itself of all excitement, but calling up, at every hour, the images of his brave companions in danger—men whom he had known when the sun of his young hopes shone unclouded, and whom he had survived but to be made sensible of the curse of exemption from a similar fate; still, with that instinctive delicacy of a mind whose natural refinement not even a heavy weight of grief could wholly deaden, he felt some hesitation in giving expression to a wish, the compliance with which would, necessarily, separate him from one who had so courteously treated him, and whom he feared to wound by an appearance of indifference.

"I think, Mr. Grantham," pursued Colonel Forrester, remarking his hesitation, "I can understand what is passing in your mind. However I beg you will suffer no mere considerations of courtesy to interfere with your inclination. I can promise you will find this place most dismally dull, especially to one who has no positive duty to perform in it. If I may venture to recommend, therefore, you will accompany Captain Jackson. The ride will afford you more subject for diversion than any thing we can furnish here."

Thus happily assisted in his decision. Gerald said, "since, Sir, you leave it optional with me, I think I shall avail myself of your kind offer and accompany Captain Jackson. It is not a very cheering sight," he pursued, anxious to assign a satisfactory reason for his choice, "to have constantly before one's eyes the scene of so signal a discomfiture as that which our arms have experienced this day."

"And yet," said Colonel Forrester, "despite of that discomfiture, there was nothing in the conduct of those engaged that should call a blush into the cheek of the most fastidious stickler for national glory. There is not an officer here present," he continued, "who is not prepared to attest with myself, that your column in particular behaved like heroes. By the way, I could wish to know, (but you will use your

own discretion in answering or declining the question, recollect,) what was the actual strength of your attacking force ?"

"I can really see no objection to a candid answer to your question, Colonel," returned Gerald, after a moment's consideration. "Each division was, I believe, for I cannot state with certainty, little more than two hundred strong, making in all, perhaps, from six hundred to six hundred and fifty men. In return, may I ask, the number of those who so effectually repulsed us ?"

"Why I guess only one hundred and fifty, and most all my volunteers," somewhat exultingly exclaimed Major Killdeer.

"Only one hundred and fifty men !" repeated Gerald, unable to disguise his vexation and astonishment.

"That ere's a poser for him," said the Major, turning and addressing Captain Buckhorn in an undertone, who replied to him with a wink from his nearest eye.

"Even so, Mr. Grantham," replied the Colonel. "One hundred and fifty men of all arms, save artillery, composed my force at the moment when your columns crossed the plain. To night we muster one hundred and forty nine."

"Good Heaven !" exclaimed Gerald warming into excitement, with vexation and pique, "what a disgraceful affair."

"Disgraceful, yes—but only in as far as regards those who planned, and provided (or rather ought to have provided) the means of attack. I can assure you, Mr. Grantham, that although prepared to defend my post to the last, when I saw your columns first emerge from the wood, I did not expect, with my small force, to have been enabled to hold the place one hour; for who could have supposed that even a school boy, had such been placed at the head of an army, would have sent forward a storming party, without either fascines to fill a trench, or ladders to ascend from it when filled. *Had these been* provided, there can be no doubt of the

issue, for, to repulse the attempt at escalade in one quarter, I must have concentrated the whole of my little force—and thereby afforded an unopposed entrance to the other columns —or even granting my garrison to have been sufficient to keep two of your divisions in check, there still remained a third to turn the scale of success against us."

"I can understand the satisfaction with which you discovered this wretched bungling on the part of our leaders," remarked Gerald with vexation.

"No sooner had I detected the deficiency," pursued Colonel Forrester, "than I knew the day would be my own, since the obstacles opposed to your attempt would admit of my spreading my men over the whole line embraced within the attack. The result, you see has justified my expectation. But enough of this. After the fatigues of the day you must require both food and rest. Captain Jackson, I leave it to you to do the honors of hospitality towards Mr. Grantham, who will so shortly become your fellow traveller, and if, when he has performed the ablutions he seems so much to require, my wardrobe can furnish any thing your own cannot supply to transform him into a backwoodsman, (in which garb I would strongly advise him to travel,) I beg it may be put under contribution without ceremony."

So saying, Colonel Forrester departed to the rude log hut that served him for his head quarters, first enjoining his uncouth second to keep a sufficient number of men on the alert, and take such other precautions as were necessary to guard against surprise—an event, however, of which little apprehension was entertained, now that the British troops appeared to have been wholly withdrawn.

Sick, wearied, and unhappy, Gerald was but too willing to escape to the solitude of retirement, to refuse the offer which Captain Jackson made of his own bed, it being his intention to sit up all night in the mess room, ready to communicate instantly with the Colonel in the event of any alarm. Declining the pressing invitation of the officers to join in the

repast they were about to make for the first time since the morning, and more particularly that of Captain Buckhorn, who strongly urged him to "bring himself to an anchor and try a little of the Wabash," he took a polite but hasty leave of them all, and was soon installed for the night in the Aid-de-Camp's dormitory.

It would be idle to say that Gerald never closed his eyes that night—still more idle would it be to attempt a description of all that passed through a mind whose extent of wretchedness may be inferred from his several desperate, although unsuccessful, efforts at the utter annihilation of all thought. When he met Colonel Forrester and his officers in the mess room at breakfast, he was dressed, as had been recommended, in the hunting frock and belt of a backwoodsman; and in this, his gentlemanly figure looked to such advantage as to excite general attention—so much so indeed, that Major Killdeer was more than once detected in eying his own heavy and uncouth person, as if to ascertain if the points of excellence were peculiar to the dress or to the man. Sick and dispirited as he was, Gerald felt the necessity of an attempt to rally, and however the moralist may condemn the principle, there is no doubt that he was considerably aided in his effort by one or two glasses of bitters which Captain Buckhorn strongly recommended as being of his wife's making, and well calculated to put some colour into a man's face—an advantage in which, he truly remarked, Grantham was singularly deficient.

Accurate intelligence having been obtained from a party of scouts, who had been dispatched early in the morning to track their course, that the British General with his troops and Indians had finally departed, preparations were made about midday for the interment of the fallen. Two large graves were accordingly dug on the outer brow of the ravine, and into these the bodies of the fallen soldiers were deposited with all the honors of war. A smaller grave, within the fort, and near the spot where they so nobly fell, was con-

siderately allotted to Cranstoun and Middlemore. There was a composedness on the brow of the former that likened him, even in death, to the living man; while, about the good-humoured mouth of poor Middlemore, played the same sort of self satisfied smile that had always been observable there, when about to deliver himself of a sally. Gerald, who had imposed upon himself the painful duty of attending to their last committal to earth, could not help fancying that Middlemore must have breathed his last with an inaudible pun upon his lips—an idea that inexpressibly affected him. Weighed down with sorrow as was his own soul, he had yet a tear for the occasion—not that his brave comrades were dead, but that they had died with so much to attach them to life—while he whose hope was in death alone had been chained, as by a curse, to an existence compared with which death was the first of human blessings.

On the following morning, after an early breakfast, he and Captain Jackson quitted the fort—Colonel Forrester, (who had appeared to remark that the brusque manner of his Aid-de-Camp was not altogether understood by his charge,) taking occasion at parting to assure the latter that, with all his eccentricity he was a kind hearted man, whom he had selected to be near him more for his personal courage, zeal, and general liberality of feeling, than for any qualifications of intellect he possessed.

The means provided for their transport into the interior were well assimilated to the dreariness of the country through which they passed. Two common pack horses, lean, galled by the saddle, and callous from long aquaintance with the admonitory influence both of whip and spur, had been selected by Captain Jackson as the best within the fort, and, as a first evidence of the liberality ascribed to him by his Commander, the fastest of these (if a choice there was) he selected for his own use. Neither were the trappings out *of keeping* with the steeds they decked. Moth eaten saddles, almost black with age, beneath which were spread

pieces of dirty blanket to prevent further excoriation of the already bared and reeking back—bridles, the original thickness of which had been doubled by the incrustation of mould and dirt that pertinaciously adhered to them—stirrups and bits, with their accompanying buckles (the absence of curb chains being supplied by pieces of rope) covered with the rust of half a century—all afforded evidence of the wretchedness of resource peculiar to a back settlement population. Over the hard saddles, however, had been strapped the blankets which, when the travellers were fortunate enough to meet with a hut at the close of their day's ride, or, as was more frequently the case, when compelled to bivouac in the forest before the fire kindled by the industry of the hardy Aid-de-Camp, served them as their only couch of rest, while the small leather valise tied to the pummel of the saddle, and containing their scanty wardrobe, was made to do the duty of the absent pillow. The blanket Gerald found to be the greatest advantage of his grotesque equipment—so much so indeed, that when compelled, by the heavy rains which took place shortly after their departure, to make it serve after the fashion of a backwoodsman as a covering for his loins and shoulders, he was obliged to own that his miseries, great as they were, were yet susceptible of increase.

Notwithstanding Captain Jackson had taken what, he considered to be, the best of the two Rosinantes for himself, Gerald had no reason to deny the character for kind-heartedness given of him by Colonel Forrester. Frequently, when winding through some dense forest, or moving over some extensive plain where nothing beyond themselves told of the existence of man, his companion would endeavour to divert him from the abstraction and melancholy in which he was usually plunged, and, ascribing his despondency to an unreal cause, seek to arouse him by the consolatory assurance that he was not the first man who had been taken prisoner—adding, that *there was no use in* snivelling, as "what was done couldn't

be undone, and no great harm neither, as there was some as pretty gals in Kaintuck as could be picked out in a day's ride; and that to a good looking young fellow like himself, with nothing to do but to make love to them, *that* ought to be no mean consideration, enabling him, as it would, to while away the tedium of captivity." At other times he would launch forth into some wild rhapsody, the invention of the moment, or seek to entertain his companion with startling anecdotes connected with his encounters with the Indians on the Wabash, (where he had formerly served,) in the course of which much of the marvellous, to call it by the most indulgent term, was necessarily mixed up—not perhaps that he was quite sensible of this himself, but because he possessed a constitutional proneness to exaggeration that rendered him even more credulous of the good things he uttered than those to whom he detailed them.

But Gerald heard without being amused, and, although he felt thankful for the intention, was distressed that his abstraction should be the subject of notice, and his despondency the object of care. To avoid this he frequently suffered Jackson to take the lead, and following some distance in the rear with his arms folded and the reins loose upon his horse's neck, often ran the risk of having his own neck broken by the frequent stumbling of the unsure-footed beast. But the Captain as often returned to the charge, for, in addition to a sincere desire to rally his companion, he began at length to find it exceedingly irksome to travel with one who neither spoke himself nor appeared to enjoy speech in another; and when he had amused himself with whistling, singing, hallooing, and cutting a thousand antics with his arms, until he was heartily tired of each of these several diversions, he would rein in his horse to suffer Gerald to come up, and, after a conciliating offer of his rum flask, accompanied by a slice of hung beef that lined the wallet depending from his shoulder, (neither of which were often refused,) enter upon some new and strange exploit, of which

he was as usual the hero. Efforced in a degree to make some return for the bribe offered to his patience, Gerald would lend—all he could—his ear to the tale; but long before the completion he would give such evidence of his distraction as utterly to disconcert the narrator, and cause him finally to have recourse to one of the interludes above described.

In this manner they had journeyed some days, when the rains suddenly commenced with a violence, and continued with a pertinacity, that might have worn out the cheerfulness of much less impatient spirits than those of our travellers, who, without any other protection than what was afforded by the blanket tightly girt round the loins, and fastened over the shoulder, in front of the chest, presented an appearance quite as wild as the waste they traversed. It was in vain, that in order to promote a more rapid circulation, they essayed to urge their jaded beasts out of the jog-trot in which they had set out. Accustomed to this from the time when they first emerged from colthood into horsehood, the aged steeds, like many aged senators of their day, were determined enemies to any thing like innovation on the long established customs of their caste; and although, unlike the said senators, they were made to bear all the burdens of the state, still did they not suffer themselves to be driven out of the sluggish habits in which sluggish animals, of every description, seem to feel themselves privileged to indulge. Whip and spur therefore were alike applied in vain, as to any accelerated motion in themselves; but with this advantage at least to their riders, that, while the latter toiled vigorously for an increase of vital warmth, through the instrumentality of their con-complying hacks, they found it where they least seemed to look for it—in the mingled anger and activity which kept them at the fruitless task.

It was at the close of one of those long days of wearying travel throughout a vast and unsheltered plain, (where only *here and there rose* an occasional cluster of trees, like oases

in the desert,) that, drenched to the skin with the steady rain which, commencing with the dawn, had continued without a moment's intermission, they arrived at a small log-hut, situate on the skirt of a forest forming one of the boundaries of the vast savannah they had traversed. Such was the unpromising appearance of this apology for a human dwelling that, under any other circumstances, even the "not very d—d particular" Jackson, as the Aid-de-Camp often termed himself, would have passed it by without stopping; but after a long day's ride, and suffering from the greatest evils to which a traveller can well be subjected—cold, wet, and hunger—even so wretched a resting-place as this was not to be despised; and accordingly a determination was formed to stop there for the night. On riding up to the door, it was opened to their knock, when a tall man—apparently its only occupant, came forth—and, after surveying the travellers a moment with a suspicious eye, inquired "what the stranngers wanted?"

"Why, I guess," said Jackson, "it doesn't need much conjuration to tell that. Food and lodging for ourselves, to be sure; and a wisp of hay and tether for our horses.—Hospitality in short; and that's what no true Tennessee man, bred and born, ever refused yet. No, not even to an enemy, such a night as this."

"Then you must go further in search of it," replied the woodsman, surlily, "I don't keep no tavern, and ha'nt got no accommodation; and what's more, I reckon, I'm no Tennessee man."

"But any accommodation will do, friend. If you hav'nt got beds, we'll sit up all night, and warm our toes at the fire, and spin long yarns, as they tell in the Eastern sea-ports. Anything but turn a fellow out such a night as this."

"But I say, strannger," returned the man, fiercely and determinedly, "I a'nt got no room any how, and you *shan't bide* here."

"*Oh, ho!* my old cock, that's the ticket, is it? but you'll

see whether an old stager, like me, is to be turned out of any man's house such a night as this. I hav'nt served two campaigns against the Ingins and the British for nothing; and here I rest for the night."

So saying, the determined Jackson coolly dismounted from his horse, and unbuckling the girth, proceeded to deposit the saddle, with the valise attached to it, within the hut the door of which still stood open.

The woodsman, perceiving his object, made a movement, as if to bar the passage; but Jackson, with great activity, seized him by the wrist of the left hand, and, all powerful as the ruffian was, sent him dancing some few yards in front of the threshold before he was aware of his intention, or could resist the peculiar *knack* with which it was accomplished. The Aid-de-Camp, meanwhile, had deposited his saddle in a corner near the fire, and on his return to the door, met the inhospitable woodsman advancing as if to court a personal encounter.

"Now, I'll tell you what it is, friend," he said calmly, throwing back at the same time the blanket that concealed his uniform, and—what was more imposing—a brace of large pistols stuck in his belt. "You'd better have no nonsense with me, I promise you, or—" and he tapped with the fore finger of his right hand upon the butt of one of them, with an expression that could not be misunderstood.

The woodsman seemed little awed by this demonstration. He was evidently one on whom it might have been dangerous for one man, however well armed, to have forced his presence, so far away from every other human habitation; and it is probable that his forbearance then arose from the fact of their being two opposed to him, for he glanced rapidly from one to the other, nor was it until he seemed to have mentally decided that the odds of two to one were somewhat unequal, that he at length withdrew himself out of the door-way, as if in passive assent to the stay he could *not well prevent.*

"Just so, my old cock," continued Jackson, finding that he had gained his point, "and when you speak of this again, don't forget to say it was a true Tennessee man, bred and born, that gave you a lesson in what no American ever wanted—hospitality to a stranger. Suppose you begin and make yourself useful, by tethering and foddering old spare bones."

"I reckon as how you've hands as well as me," rejoined the surly woodsman, "and every man knows the ways of his own beast best. As for fodder, they'll find it on the skirt of the wood, and where natur' planted it."

Gerald meanwhile, finding victory declare itself in favor of his companion, had followed his example and entered the hut with his saddle. As he again quitted it, a sudden flash of light from the fire, which Jackson was then in the act of stirring, fell upon the countenance of the woodsman who stood without, his arms folded and his brow scowling, as if planning some revenge for the humiliation to which he had been subjected. In the indistinct dusk of the evening Grantham had not been able to remark more than the outline of the figure; but the voice struck him as one not unknown to him, although somewhat harsher in its tones than that which his faint recollection of the past supplied. The glance he had now obtained, momentary as it was, put every doubt to rest. What his feelings were in recognizing in the woodsman the traitor settler of the Canadas, Jeremiah Desborough, we leave to our readers to infer.

CHAPTER X.

THERE was a time when to have met his father's enemy thus, would have been to have called into activity all the dormant fierceness of Gerald's nature; but since they had last parted, a new channel had been opened to his feelings, and the deep and mysterious grief in which we have seen him shrouded, had been of so absorbing and selfish a nature, as to leave him little consideration for sorrows not his own. The rash impetuosity of his former character, which had often led him to act even before he thought, and to resent an injury before it could well be said to have been offered, had moreover given place to a self-command, the fruit of the reflective habits and desire of concealment which had made him latterly almost a stranger to himself.

Whatever his motives for outwardly avoiding all recognition of the settler, certain it is that, so far from this, he sought sedulously to conceal his own identity, by drawing the slouched hat, which formed a portion of his new equipment, lower over his eyes. Left to do the duties of the rude hostelry, Captain Jackson and he now quitted the hut, and leading their jaded, smoking, steeds a few rods off to the verge of the plain they had so recently traversed, prepared to dispose of them for the night. Gerald had by this time become too experienced in the mode of travelling through an American wilderness, not to understand that he who expects to find a companion in his horse in the morning, must duly secure him with the tether at night. Following, therefore, the example of the Aid-de-Camp, he applied himself, amid the still pelting rain, to the not very cleanly task of binding round the fetlock joints of his steed several yards of untanned

hide strips, with which they were severally provided for the purpose. Each gave his steed a parting slap on the buttock with the hard bridle, Jackson exclaiming, " go ye luxurious beasts, ye have a whole prairie of wet grass to revel in for the night," and then left them to make the best of their dainty food.

While returning, Grantham took occasion to observe, that he had reason to think he knew the surly and inhospitable woodsman, by whom however he was not desirous of being recognized, and therefore begged as a favor that Captain Jackson would not, in the course of the night, mention his name, or even allude to him in any way that could lead to an inference that he was any other than he seemed, a companion and brother officer of his own ; promising, in conclusion, to give him, in the course of the next day's journey, some little history of the man which would fully explain his motives. With this request Jackson unhesitatingly promised compliance, adding, good humouredly, that he was not sorry to pledge himself to any thing that would thaw his companion's tongue into sociability, and render himself, for the first time since their departure, a listener. Before entering the hut Gerald further observed in a whisper, that the better to escape recognition, he would, as much as possible, avoid joining in any conversation which might ensue, and therefore hoped his companion would not think it rude if he suffered him to bear the tax. Jackson again promised to keep the attention of the woodsman directed as much as possible to himself, observing, that he thought Gerald had already, to his cost, discovered he was not one easily tired out by conversation, should their host be that way inclined.

On opening the door of the cabin, they found that the woodsman, or more properly the settler as we shall again term him, making a virtue of necessity, had somewhat cheered its interior. A number of fine logs, sufficient to last throughout the night had been heaped upon the hearth, and

these, crackling and fizzing, and emitting sparks in all the burly of a hickory wood-fire, gave promise of a night of comparative comfort. Ensconced in the farther corner of the chimney, the settler had already taken his seat, and, regardless of the entrance of the strangers, (with his elbows resting on his knees, and his face buried in his large palms), kept his eyes fixed upon the fire, as if with a sullen determination neither to speak nor suffer himself to be questioned. But the Aid-de-Camp was by no means disposed to humour him in his fancy. The idea of passing some eight or ten consecutive hours in company with two fellow beings, without calling into full play the bump of loquacity, with which nature had largely endowed him, was, in his view, little better than the evil from which his perseverance had just enabled him to escape. Making himself perfectly at home, he unbuckled the wet blanket from his loins, and spreading it, with that of Gerald, to dry upon the rude floor before the fire, drew forward a heavy uncouth looking table, (which, with two or three equally unpolished chairs, formed the whole of the furniture), and deposited thereon the wallet or haversack in which remained a portion of provision. He then secured the last vacant chair, and taking up a position on the right of the table which lay between himself and Gerald, let it fall upon the dry clay hearth, with a violence that caused the settler to quit his attitude of abstraction for one of anger and surprise.

"Sorry to disturb you, friend," he said; "but these chairs of yours are so curst heavy, there's no handling them decently; 'specially with cold fingers."

"Beggars, I reckon, have no right to be choosers," returned the settler; "the chairs is quite good enough for me—and no one axed you to sit on em."

"I'll tell you what it is, old cock," continued the Aid-de-Camp, edging his seat closer, and giving his host a smart friendly slap upon the thigh, "this dull life of yours don't *much improve your* temper. Why, as I am a true Tennessee

man, bred and born, I never set eyes upon such a crab apple in all my life—you'd turn a whole dairy of the sweetest milk that ever came from prairie grass sour in less than no time. I take it, you must be crossed in love old boy, eh ?"

"Crossed in hell," returned the settler, savagely. "I reckon as how it don't consarn you whether I look sour or sweet—what you want is a night's lodgin', and you've got it, so don't trouble me no more."

"Very sorry, but I shall," said Jackson, secretly congratulating himself that, now he had got the tongue of his host in motion, he had a fair chance of keeping it so. "I must trouble you for some bread, and whatever else your larder may afford. I'll pay you honestly for it, friend."

"I should guess," said the settler, his stern features brightening for the first time into a smile of irony, "as how a man who had served a campaign agin the Ingins and another agin the British, might contrive to do without sich a luxury as bread. You'll find no bread here I reckon."

"What, not even a bit of corn bread ! Try, my old cock, and rummage up a crust or two, for hung beef is devilish tight work for the teeth, without a little bread of some sort for a relish."

"If you'd ha' used your eyes you'd ha' seen nothin' like a corn patch for twenty mile round about this. Bread never entered this hut since I been here. I don't eat it."

"More's the pity," replied Jackson, with infinite drollery ; but though you may not like it yourself, your friends may."

"I *have* no friends—I *wish* to have no friends," was the sullen reply.

"More's the pity still," pursued the Aid-de-Camp, "but what do you live on then, old cock, if you don't eat bread ?"

"Human flesh. Take that as a relish to your hung beef."

Scarcely had the strange confession escaped the settler's lips, when Jackson, active as a deer, was at the farther end of the hut, one hand holding the heavy chair as a shield before him, the other placed upon the butt of one of his pistols. The

pieces of dirty blanket to prevent further excoriation of the already bared and reeking back—bridles, the original thickness of which had been doubled by the incrustation of mould and dirt that pertinaciously adhered to them—stirrups and bits, with their accompanying buckles (the absence of curb chains being supplied by pieces of rope) covered with the rust of half a century—all afforded evidence of the wretchedness of resource peculiar to a back settlement population. Over the hard saddles, however, had been strapped the blankets which, when the travellers were fortunate enough to meet with a hut at the close of their day's ride, or, as was more frequently the case, when compelled to bivouac in the forest before the fire kindled by the industry of the hardy Aid-de-Camp, served them as their only couch of rest, while the small leather valisse tied to the pummel of the saddle, and containing their scanty wardrobe, was made to do the duty of the absent pillow. The blanket Gerald found to be the greatest advantage of his grotesque equipment—so much so indeed, that when compelled, by the heavy rains which took place shortly after their departure, to make it serve after the fashion of a backwoodsman as a covering for his loins and shoulders, he was obliged to own that his miseries, great as they were, were yet susceptible of increase.

Notwithstanding Captain Jackson had taken what, he considered to be, the best of the two Rosinantes for himself, Gerald had no reason to deny the character for kind-heartedness given of him by Colonel Forrester. Frequently, when winding through some dense forest, or moving over some extensive plain where nothing beyond themselves told of the existence of man, his companion would endeavour to divert him from the abstraction and melancholy in which he was usually plunged, and, ascribing his despondency to an unreal cause, seek to arouse him by the consolatory assurance that he was not the first man who had been taken prisoner—adding, that *there was no* use in snivelling, as "what was done couldn't

"I rather calculate not Mister," sneered the settler. "Besides I don't eat the United States subjects; consequently they've no claim to interfere."

"Who the devil do you eat then," asked Jackson, gathering courage with his curiosity, and advancing a pace or two nearer the fire, "or is it all a hum?"

The settler approached the fire, stooped a little, and applying his shoulder to the top of the opening, thrust his right hand and arm up the chimney.

"I reckon that's no hum," he said, producing and throwing upon the table a piece of dark dry flesh, that resembled in appearance the upper part of a human arm. "If you're fond of a relish," he pursued with a fierce laugh; "you'll find that mighty well suited to the palate—quite as sweet as a bit of smok'd venison."

"Why you don't really mean to say that's part of a man?" demanded Jackson, advancing cautiously to the table, and turning over the shrivelled mass with the point of his dagger. "Why, I declare, its just the color of my dried beef."

"But I do though—and what's more, of my own killin' and dryin'. Purty naturist you must be not to see that's off an Ingin's arm."

"Oh an Ingin's only, is it?" returned the Aid-de-Camp, whose apprehension began rapidly to subside, now that he had obtained the conviction that it was not the flesh of a white man. "Well, I'm sure! who'd have thought it. I take it, old cock, you've been in the wars as well as myself."

"A little or so I reckon, and I expect to be in them agin shortly—as soon as my stock of food's out. I've only a thigh bone to pick after this, and then I'm off. But why don't you take your seat at the fire. There's nothin' so out of the way in the sight of a naked arm, is there? I reckon if you're a soger, you must have seen many a one lopped off in the wars."

"Yes, friend," said Jackson, altering the position of the table and placing it between the settler and himself; "a

good many lopped off, as you say, and in a devil of a stew, but not exactly eaten. However be so good as to return this to the chimney, and when I've eaten something from my bag I'll listen to what you have to say about it."

"Jist so, and go without my own supper I suppose, to please you. But tarnation, while you're eatin' a bit of your hung beef I'll try a snack of mine."

So saying he deliberately took from the table the dried arm he had previously flung there, and, removing a large clasp knife from a pocket beneath his coarse hunting frock, proceeded to help himself to several thin slices, corresponding precisely in appearance with those which the Aid-de-Camp divided in the same manner.

Jackson had managed to swallow three or four pieces of his favorite hung beef with all the avidity of an appetite, rendered keen by the absence of every other stimulant than hunger; but no sooner did he perceive his host fastening with a degree of fury on his unnatural food, than, sick and full of loathing, his stomach rejected further aliment, and he was compelled to desist. During all this time Grantham, who, although he had assumed the manner and attitude of a sleeping man, was a watchful observer of all that passed, neither moved nor uttered a syllable, except on one occasion to put away from him the food Jackson had offered.

"Sorry to see your ride has given you so poor an appetite," said the settler, with a look expressive of the savage delight he felt in annoying his visitor. "I reckon that's rather unsavory stuff you've got there, that you can't eat it without bread. I say young man"—addressing Grantham, "can't you find no appetite neither, that you sit there snorin', as if you never meant to wake agin."

Gerald's head sunk lower on his chest, and his affectation of slumber became more profound.

"Try a drop of this," said Jackson, offering his canteen, after having drank himself, and with a view to distract attention from his companion. "You seem to have no liquor

in the house, and I take it you require something hot as h–ll, and strong as d——n——n, after that ogre like repast of yours."

The settler seized the can, and raised it to his lips. It contained some of the fiery whiskey we have already described as the common beverage in most parts of America. This, all powerful as it was, he drained off as though it had been water, and with the greedy avidity of one who finds himself suddenly restored to the possession of a favorite and long absent drink.

"Hollo, my friend," exclaimed the angry Aid-de-Camp, who had watched the rapid disappearance of his "travellers best companion," as he quaintly enough termed it, down the capacious gullet of the settler—and snatching at the same moment the nearly emptied canteen from his hands. I take it, that's not handsome. As I'm a true Tenessee man, bred and born, it aint at all hospitable to empty off a pint of raw liquor at a spell, and have not so much as a glass of methiglin to offer in return. What the hell do you suppose we're to do tomorrow for drink, during a curst long ride through the wood, and not a house of call till nightfall along the road."

The settler drew a breath long and heavy in proportion to the draught he had swallowed, and when his lungs had again recovered their play, answered blusteringly, in a voice that betokened incipient intoxication.

"Roar me up a saplin' Mister, but you're mighty stingy of the Wabash. I reckon as how I made you a free offer of my food, and it war'nt no fault of mine if you did'nt choose to take it. It would only have been relish for relish after all—and that's what I call fair swap."

"Well, no matter," said Jackson soothingly; "what's done can't be undone, therefore I take it its no use argufying—however, my old cock, when next you got the neck of a canteen of mine, twixt your lips, I hope it may do the cockles of your heart good; that's all. But lets hear how you came by them pieces of nigger's flesh, and how it is you've taken

it into your head to turn squatter here. You seem," glancing around, "to have no sleeping room to spare, and one may as well sit up and chat as have one's bones bruised to squash on the hard boards."

"It's a sad tale," said the settler gruffly and with a darkening brow, "and brings bitter thoughts with it; but as the liquor has cheered me up a bit, I don't much mind if I do tell you how I skivered the varmint. Indeed," he pursued savagely, "that always gives me a pleasure to think of, for I owed them a desperate grudge—the bloody red skins and imps of hell. I was on my way to Detroit, to see the spot once more where my poor boy Phil lay rottin', and one dark night (for I only ventured to move at night,) I came slick upon two Ingins as was lying fast asleep before their fire in a deep ravine. The one nearest to me had his face unkivered, and I knew the varmint for the tall dark Delaweer chief as made one of the party after poor Phil and me, a sight that made me thirst for the blood of the heathens as a child for mother's milk. Well, how do you suppose I managed them. I calculate you'd never guess. Why, I stole as quiet as a fox until I got jist atween them, and then holdin' a cocked pistol to each breast, I called out in a thunderin' voice that made the woods ring agin Kit-chimocomon, which you know, as you've been in the wars, signifies long knife or Yankee. You'd a laugh'd fit to split your sides I guess, to see the stupid stare of the devils, as startin' out of their sleep, they saw a pistol within three inches of each of'em. 'Ugh,' says they, as if they did'nt know well whether to take it as a joke or not. 'Yes, 'ugh' and be damn'd to you,' say's I: you may go and 'ugh' in hell next—and with that snap went the triggers, and into their curst carcasses went the balls. The one I killed outright but t'other the Delaweer chief, was by a sudden shift only slightly wounded, and he sprung on his feet and out with his knife. But I had a knife too, and all a disappinted father's rage to boot, so at it we went closin' and strikin' with our

knives like two fierce fiends of the forest. It was noble sport sure*ly*. At last the Delaweer fell over the bleedin' body of his warrior and I top of him. As he fell the knife dropt from his hand and he could'nt reach it no how, while I still gripped mine fast. 'Ugh,' he muttered agin, as if askin' to know what I meant to do next. 'Ugh,' and be damn'd to you once more, say's I—and the pint of my long knife was soon buried in his black heart. Then, when I see them both dead I eat my own meal at their fire, for I was tarnation hungry, and while I was eatin' a thought came across me that it would be good fun to make smoked meat of the varmint, so when I had tucked it in purty considerably, what with hominy and dried bear's meat, moistened with a little Wabash I found in the Delaweer chief's canteen, I set to and regularly quartered them. The trunks I left behind, but the limbs I packed up in the blankets that had been used to kiver them, I reckon; and with them slung across my shoulders, like a saddle bag across a horse, I made tracks through the swamps and the prairies for this here hut, which I know'd no livin' soul had been nigh for many a long year. And now," he concluded with a low drunken laugh, "you've the history of the dried meat. There isn't much left but when all is gone I'm off to the wars, for I can't find no peace I reckon without my poor boy Phil." He paused a moment, and then, as if suddenly influenced by some painful recollection, he struck his hand with startling violence upon the table, and, while every feature of his iron countenance seemed worked up to a pitch of intensity, added with fearful calmness. "May God's curse light upon me if I don't have my revenge of them Granthams yet:—yes" he continued with increased excitement of voice and manner, while he kicked one of the blazing hickory logs in the chimney with all the savageness of drunken rage, causing a multitude of sparks to spit forth teen [illegible] with,—"jist so would I kick them of your heart good; that's [illegible] my poor boy."

by them pieces of nigger's flesh, [illegible]am, he can't meant you?"

abruptly questioned the Aid-de-Camp, drawing back his chair and resting the palms of his hands upon his knees, while he fixed his eye keenly and inquiringly upon Gerald.

But Gerald had no time to answer him--Scarcely had the name escaped the lips of the incautious Jackson, when a yell of exultation from the settler drew him quickly to his feet, and in the next moment he felt one hand of his enemy grappling at his throat, while the fingers of the other were rapidly insinuating themselves into the hair that shadowed one of his temples, with the evident intention to "gouge" him. Weak and emaciated as he was, Gerald was soon made sensible of the disproportion of physical strength thus suddenly brought into the struggle, and as the savage laugh of the settler, as his fingers wound themselves closer and closer within the clustering hair, proclaimed his advantage, he felt that his only chance of saving the threatened eye was by having recourse to some sudden and desperate attempt to free himself from the gripe of his opponent. Summoning all his strength into one vigorous effort, he rushed forward upon his enemy with such force, raising himself at the same time in a manner to throw the whole weight of his person upon him, that the latter reeled backwards several paces without the power of resistance, and falling over the table towards which he had been intentionally propelled, sank with a heavy crash to the floor, still however retaining his firm hold of his enemy and dragging him after him.

Half throttled, maddened with pain, and even more bitterly stung by a sense of the humiliating position in which he found himself, the feelings of Gerald became uncontrolable, until his anxiety to inflict a mortal injury upon his enemy became in the end as intense as that of the settler. In their fall the table had been overturned, and with it the knife which Desborough had used with his horrid repast. As the light from the blazing fire fell upon the blade, it had once caught the unassailed eye of the officer, and was the next moment *clutched in his grasp.* He raised it with a determi-

nation, inspired by the agony he endured, at once to liberate himself and to avenge his father's murder, but the idea that there was something assassin-like in the act as suddenly arrested him, and ere he had time to obey a fresh impulse of his agony, the knife was forcibly stricken from his hand. A laugh of triumph burst from the lips of the half intoxicated Desborough, but it was scarcely uttered before it was succeeded by a yell of pain, and the hand that had contrived to entwine itself, with resistless force and terrible intent, in the waving hair of the youth, fell suddenly from its grasp, enabling its victim at length to free himself altogether and start once more to his feet.

Little more than a minute had been passed in the enactment of this strange scene. The collision, the overthrow, the upraising of the knife had followed each other in such rapid succession that, until the last desperate intention of Gerald was formed, the Aid-de-Camp had not had time to interpose himself in any way between the enraged combatants. His first action had been to strike away the murderous knife with the heavy butt of one of his pistols, the other to plant such a blow upon the "gouging" hand of the settler from the same butt, as effectually to compel him to relinquish his ferocious clutch. In both objects, as we have seen, he fully succeeded.

But although his right hand had been utterly disabled by the blow from Jackson's pistol, the fury of Desborough, fed as it was by the fumes of the liquor he had swallowed, was too great to render him heedful of aught but the gratification of his vengeance. Rolling rapidly over to the point where the knife had fallen he secured it in his left hand, and then, leaping nimbly to his feet, gathered himself into a spring upon his unarmed but watchful enemy. But before the bound could be taken, the active Aid-de-Camp, covering Gerald with his body and presenting a cocked pistol, had again thwarted him in his intention.

"*I say now*, old cock, you'd much better be quiet I

guess, for them sort of tantrums won't suit me. If this here Liftenant killed your son why he'll answer for it later, but I can't let you murder my prisoner in that flumgustious manner. I'm responsible for him to the United States Government, therefore just drop that knife clean and slick upon the floor, and let's have no more of this nonsense for the night."

But even the cocked pistol had not power to restrain the fierce—almost brutal—rage of the settler, whose growing intoxication added fuel to the fire which the presence of his enemy had kindled in his heart. Heedless of the determined air and threatening posture of the Aid-de-Camp, he made a bound forward, uttering a sound that resembled the roar of a wild beast rather than the cry of a human being, and struck over Jackson's shoulder at the chest of the officer. Gerald, whose watchful eye marked the danger, had however time to step back and avoid the blow. In the next moment the Aid-de-Camp, overborne by the violence of the collision, fell heavily backwards upon the rude floor, and in his fall the pistol went off lodging the ball in the sinewy calf of Desborough's leg. Stung with acute animal pain, the whole rage of the latter was now diverted from Gerald to the Aid-de-Camp, on whom (assuming the wound to have been intentional) he threw himself with the fury of a tiger, grappling as he closed with him at his throat. But the sailor in his turn now came to the rescue of his companion, and the scene for some time, as the whole party struggled together upon the floor in the broad red glare of the wood fire, was one of fearful and desperate character. At length after an immense effort, and amid the most horrid imprecations of vengeance upon them, the officers succeeded in disarming and tying the hands of the settler behind his back, after which dragging him to a distant corner of the hut, they secured him firmly to one of the open and mis-shapen logs which composed its frame. This done, Jackson divided the little that had been left of his "Wabash" with his charge,

and then stretching himself at his length, with his feet to the fire, and his saddle for a pillow, soon fell profoundly asleep.

Too much agitated by the scene which had just passed, Gerald, although following the example of his companion, in stretching himself before the cheerful fire, was in no condition to enjoy repose. Indeed, whatever his inclination, the attempt would have been vain, for so dreadful were the denunciations of Desborough throughout the night, that sleep had no room to enter even into his thoughts. Deep and appalling were the curses and threats of vengeance which the enraged settler uttered upon all who bore the name of Grantham; and with these were mingled lamentations for his son, scarcely less revolting in their import than the curses themselves. Nor was the turbulence of the enraged man confined to mere excitement of language. His large and muscular form struggled in every direction, to free himself from the cords that secured him to the logs, and finding these too firmly bound to admit of the accomplishment of his end, he kicked his brawny feet against the floor with all the fury and impatience of a spirit, quickened into a livelier sense of restraint by the stimulus of intoxication. At length, exhausted by the efforts he had made, his struggles and his imprecations became gradually less frequent and less vigorous, until finally towards dawn they ceased altogether, and his deep and heavy breathing announced that he slept.

Accustomed to rise with the dawn, the Aid-de-Camp was not long after its appearance, in shaking off the slumber in which he had so profoundly indulged. The first object that met his eye as he raised himself up in a sitting posture from his rude bed, was Gerald stooping over the sleeping Desborough, one hand reposing upon his chest, the other holding the knife already alluded to, while every feature of his face was kindled into loathing and abhorrence of his prostrate and sleeping enemy. Startled by the expression he read *there,* and with the occurrences of the past night rushing *forcibly* upon his memory, the Aid-de-Camp called quickly *out,*

"Hold, Liftenant Grantham. Well, as I'm a true Tennessee man, bred and born, may I be most especially d—d, if I'd a thought you'd do so foul a deed. What! assassinate a sleeping drunken man?"

"Assassinate! Captain Jackson," repeated Gerald, raising himself to his full height, while a crimson flush of indignation succeeded to the deadly paleness which had overspread his cheek.

"Yes, assassinate," returned the Aid-de-Camp, fixing his eye upon that of his prisoner, yet without perceiving that it quailed under his penetrating glance. "It's an ugly word, I reckon, for you to hear, as it is for me to speak; but your quarrel last night—your fix just now—that knife;—Liftenant Grantham," and he pointed to the blade which still remained in the grasp of the accused. "Surely these things speak for themselves, and though the fellow has swallowed off all my Wabash, and be d—d to him, (making a fruitless attempt to extract a few drops from his canteen,) still I should n't like to see him murdered in that sort of way."

"I cannot blame you, Captain Jackson," said Gerald calmly, his features resuming their pallid hue. "These appearances, I grant, might justify the suspicion, horrible as it is, in one who had known more of me than yourself; but was assassination even a virtue, worlds would not tempt me to assassinate that man—wretch though he be—or even to slay him in fair and open combat."

"Then, I calculate, one night has made a pretty considerable change in your feelings, Liftenant," retorted the Aid-de-Camp. "You were both ready enough to go at it last night, when I knocked the knife out of your fist, and broke the knuckles of his gouging hand."

"I confess," said Gerald, again coloring, "that excessive pain made me wild, and I should have been tempted to have had recourse to any means to thwart him in his diabolical purpose. As you have said, however, the past night has effected

a change in my feelings towards the man, and death from my hand, under any circumstances, is the last thing he has now to apprehend." Gerald sank his head upon his chest, and sighed bitterly.

"Well," said Jackson, "all this is queer enough; but what were you doing standing over the man just now with that knife, if it was not to harm him? And as for your countenance, it scowled so savage and passionate, I was almost afraid to look at it myself."

"My motive for the action I must beg you to excuse my entering upon," replied Gerald. "Of this, however, be assured, Captain Jackson, that I had no intention to injure yon sleeping villain. On the word of an officer and a gentleman, and by the kindness you have shown me on all occasions since our journey commenced, do I solemnly assure you this is the fact."

"And on the word of an officer, and a true Tennessee man, bred and born, I am bound to believe you," returned the American, much affected. "A man that could fight so wickedly in the field would never find heart, I reckon, to stick an enemy in the dark. No, Liftenant Grantham, you were not born to be an assassin. And now let's be starting—the day has already broke."

"And yet," returned Gerald, with a smile of bitter melancholy, as they hurried towards the spot where they had left their horses, "if any man ever had reason to act so as to merit the imputation of being such, I have. In that savage woodsman, Captain Jackson, you have beheld the murderer—the self acknowledged murderer of my father."

"God bless my soul!" cried Jackson, dropping the saddle which he carried, and standing still with very amazement. "A pretty fix I've got into, to be sure. Here's one man accuses another of murdering his son, and t'other, by way of *quits, accuses* him, in his turn, of murdering his father. *Why, which am I* to believe?"

"Which you please, Captain Jackson," said the sailor coolly, yet painedly; and he moved forward in pursuit of his horse.

"Nay, Liftenant Grantham," said the Aid-de-Camp, who had again resumed his burden, and was speedily at the side of his companion, "don't be offended. I've no doubt the thing's as you say, but you must make allowance for my ideas, never too much of the brightest, being conglomerated, after a fashion, by what I have seen and heard, since we let loose our horses last night upon this prairie."

"I am not offended, only hurt," replied Gerald, shaking the hand that was cordially tendered to him; "hurt that you should doubt my word, or attach any thing to the assertion of that man beyond the mere ravings of a savage and diseased spirit. Justice to myself demands that I should explain every thing in detail."

"Now that's what I call all right and proper," returned the Aid-de-Camp, "and should be done both for your sake and mine; but we will leave it till we get once more upon the road and in sight of a tavern, for its dry work talking and listening without even so much as a gum tickler of the Wabash to moisten one's clay."

They found their horses not far from the spot where they had been left on the preceding night, and these being speedily untethered and saddled, the travellers again pursued their route towards the capital of the State in which they found themselves. As they passed the hut, which had been the scene of so much excitement to both, the voice of Desborough whom they had left fast asleep, was heard venting curses and imprecations upon them both, for having left him there to starve, bound and incapable of aiding himself. Wretch as the settler was, Gerald could not reconcile to himself the thought of his being left to perish thus miserably, and he entreated the Aid-de-Camp to enter and divide the cords. But Jackson declared this to be impolitic, urging as a *powerful reason* for declining, the probability of his having fire

arms in the hut, with which (if released,) he might follow and overtake them in their route, and sacrifice one or the other to his vengeance—an object which it would be easy to accomplish without his ever being detected. However, that the villain might have sustenance until some chance traveller should come later to his assistance, or he could manage to get rid of his bonds himself (which he might do in time) he consented to place within his reach all the dried meat that had been left of his Indian foes, together with a pail of water—the latter by way of punishment for having swilled away at his Wabash in the ungracious manner he had.

While Jackson was busied in this office of questionable charity, the rage and disappointment of the settler surpassed what it had hitherto been. Each vein of his dark brow rose distinctly and swelling from its surface, and he kicked and stamped with a fury that proclaimed the bitter tempest raging in his soul. When the Aid-de-Camp had again mounted, his shrieks and execrations became piercing, and for many minutes after they had entered into the heart of the forest in which the hut was situated, the shrill sounds continued to ring upon their ears in accents so fearful, that each felt a sensible relief when they were heard no more.

On the evening of the third day after this event, Jackson and our hero, between whom a long explanation on the subject of the settler had taken place, alighted at the door of the principal inn in Frankfort, the capital of Kentucky, which was their ultimate destination. To mine host Gerald was introduced by his escort with the formality usual on such occasions in America, and with the earnest recommendation to that most respectable personage that, as his own friend, as well as that of Colonel Forrester, every indulgence should be shown to the prisoner, that was not inconsistent with his position.

CHAPTER XI.

FEW situations in life are less enviable than that of the isolated prisoner of war. Far from the home of his affections, and compelled by the absence of all other companionship, to mix with those who, in manners, feelings, and national characteristics, form, as it were, a race apart from himself, his recollections, already sufficiently embittered by the depressing sense of captivity, are hourly awakened by some rude contrast wounding to his sensibilities, and even though no source of graver irritation should exist, a thousand petty annoyances, incident to the position, are magnified by chagrin from mole-hills into mountains. Such, however, would be the effect produced on one only, who, thrown by the accident of war into the situation of a captive, should have no grief more profound, no sorrow deeper seated than what arose from the being severed from old, and associated with new and undesired ties; one to whom life was full of the fairest buds of promise, and whose impatience of the present was only a burning desire to enter upon the future. Not so with Gerald Grantham. Time, place, circumstance, condition, were alike the same—alike indifferent to him. In the recollections of the scenes he had so lately quitted, and in which his fairer and unruffled boyhood had been passed, he took no pleasure, while the future was so enshrouded in gloom that he shrank from its very contemplation. So far from trying to wring consolation from circumstances, his object was to stupify recollection to the uttermost. He would fain have shut out both the past and the future, contenting himself as he might with the present, but the thing was impossible. The worm had eaten into his heart, and its gnaw-

ings were too painful, not poignantly to remind him of the manner in which it had been engendered.

Upwards of a fortnight had elapsed since his arrival, and yet, although Captain Jackson, prior to his return to Sandusky, had personally introduced him to many highly respectable families in Frankfort, he uniformly abstained from cultivating their acquaintance, until at length he was, naturally enough, pronounced to be a most disagreeable specimen of a British officer. Even with the inmates of the hotel, many of whom were officers of his own age, and with whom he constantly sat down to the ordinary, he avoided every thing approaching to intimacy—satisfying himself merely with discharging his share of the commonest courtesies of life. They thought it pride—it was but an effect—an irremediable effect of the utter sinking of his sad and broken spirit. The only distraction in which he eventually took pleasure, or sought to indulge, was rambling through the wild passes of the chain of wooded hills, which almost encircles the Kentuckian capital, and extends for a considerable distance in a westerly direction. The dense gloom of these narrow vallies he had remarked on his entrance by the same route, and feeling them more in unison with his sick mind than the hum and bustle of a city, which offered nothing in common with his sympathies, he now frequently passed a great portion of the day in threading their mazes—returning however, at a certain hour to his hotel, conformably with the terms of his parole.

On one occassion, tempted by the mellow beauty of the season (it was now the beginning of October) he had strayed so far, and through passes so unknown to him, that when the fast advancing evening warned him of the necessity of returning, he found he had utterly lost his way. Abstracted as he usually was, he had yet reflection enough to understand that his parole of honor required he should be at his hotel at an hour, which it would put his speed to the proof to accomplish. Despairing of finding his way by the circuitous route he had originally taken, and the proper clue to

which he had moreover lost, he determined, familiar as he was with the general bearings of the capital, to effect his return in a direct line across the chain of hills already alluded to. The deepening shadows of the wild scene, as he proposed to ascend that immediately before him, told that the sun had sunk beneath the horizon, and when he gained its summit, the last faint corruscations of light were passing rapidly away in the west. Still, by the indistinct twilight he could perceive that at his feet lay a small valley, completely hemmed in by the circular ridge on which he stood. This traversed, it was but to ascend the opposite section of the ridge, and his destination would be gained. Unlike the narrow rocky passes, which divided the hills in every other direction, in which he had previously wandered, this valley was covered with a luxuriant verdure, and upon this the feet of Gerald moved inaudibly even to himself. As he advanced more into the centre of the little plain, he thought he could perceive, at its extremity on the right, the dark outline of a building—apparently a dwelling house—and while he yet hesitated, whether he should approach it and inquire his most direct way to the town, a light suddenly appeared at that point of the valley for which he was already making. A few minutes sufficed to bring him to the spot whence the light had issued. It was a small circular building, possibly intended for a summer-house, but more resembling a temple in its construction, and so closely bordering upon the forest ridge, by a portion of the foliage by which it had previously been concealed, as to be almost confounded with it. It was furnished with a single window, the same through which the light now issued, and this narrow, elongated, and studded with iron bars, was so placed as to prevent one even taller than our hero from gazing into the interior, without the aid of some elevation. But Gerald, independently of his anxiety to reach the town in time to prevent comment upon his absence, had no desire to occupy himself with subjects foreign to his *object. Curiosity* was a feeling dead within his bosom, and

he was preparing, without once staying his course, to ascend the ridge at the side of the temple, when he fancied he heard a suppressed groan, as of one suffering from intense agony—Not the groan, but the peculiar tone in which it was uttered, arrested his attention, and excited a vague yet stirring interest in his breast. On approaching closer to the temple, he found that at its immediate basement the earth had been thrown up into a sort of mound, which so elevated the footing as to admit of his reaching the bars of the window with his hands. Active as we have elsewhere shown him to be, he was not long in obtaining a full view of the interior, when a scene met his eye which rivetted him, as well it might, in utter astonishment. Upon the rude uncarpeted floor knelt a female, who, with clapsed and uplifted hands, had her eyes fixed upon a portrait that hung suspended from the opposite wall—her figure, clad in a loose robe of black, developing by its attitude a contour of such rich and symmetrical proportion as might be difficult for the imagination to embody. And who was the being upon whom his each excited sense now lingered with an admiration little short of idolatry? One whom, a moment before, he believed to be still far distant, whom he had only a few months previously fled from, as from a pestilence, and whom he had solemnly sworn never to behold again, yet whom he continued to love with a passion that defied every effort of his judgment to subdue, making his life a wilderness—Matilda Montgomerie—And if her beauty had *then* had such surpassing influence over his soul, what was not its effect when he beheld her *now*, every grace of womanhood exhibited in a manner to excite admiration the most intense!

It would be vain to describe all that passed through the mind of Gerald Grantham, while he thus gazed upon her whose beauty was the rock on which his happiness had been wrecked. His first impulse had been to fly, but the fascination which rivetted him to the window deprived him of all power until eventually, of all the host of feelings that had

crowded tumultuously upon his heart, passion alone remained triumphant. Unable longer to control his impatience, he was on the point of quitting his station, for the purpose of knocking and obtaining admission by a door which he saw opposite to him, when a sudden change in the attitude of Matilda arrested the movement.

She had risen, and with her long and dark hair floating over her white shoulders, now advanced towards the portrait, on which her gaze had hitherto been so repeatedly turned. This was so placed that Gerald had not previously an opportunity of remarking more than the indistinct outline, which proved it to represent a human figure ; but as she for a moment raised the light with one hand, while with the other she covered it with a veil which had been drawn aside, he distinctly saw that it was the portrait of an officer dressed in the American uniform ; and it even occurred to him that he had before seen the face, although, in his then excited state he could not recollect where. Even had he been inclined to tax his memory, the effort would have been impracticable, for another direction was now given to his interest.

On the left, and close under the window, stood a rude sofa and ruder table, the only pieces of furniture which Gerald could observe within the temple. Upon the former Matilda now reclined herself, and placing the candle upon the table at her side, proceeded to unfold and peruse a letter which she had previously taken from her pocket book. The same unconsciousness of observation inducing the same unstudiedness of action, the whole disposition of the form bore a character of voluptuousness, which the presumed isolation of her who thus exhibited herself, a model of living grace, alone could justify. But although the form was full of the eloquence of passion, one had but to turn to the pale and severe face, to find there was no corresponding expression in the heart. As heretofore, the brow of the American wore a cast of *thought—only deeper*, more decided—and even while her

dark eyes flashed fire, as if in disappointment and anger at sundry passages in the letter over which she lingered, not once did the slightest color tinge her cheek, or the gloom dissipate itself from that cold brow. Emotion she felt, for this her heaving bosom and occasionally compressed lip betokened. Yet never was contrast more marked than that between the person and the face of Matilda Montgomerie, as Gerald Grantham then beheld her.

On one who had seen her thus for the first time, the cold, calm countenance of the singular girl, would have acted as a chastener to the emotions called up by the glowing expression of her faultless form, but although there was now a character of severity on her features, which must have checked and chilled the ardent admiration produced by that form on a mere stranger, Gerald but too well remembered occasions when the harmony of both had been complete, and when the countenance, rich in all those fascinations, which, even in her hours of utmost collectedness, never ceased to attach to the person, had beamed upon him in a manner to stir his very soul into madness. There were other and later recollections too, that forced themselves upon his memory; but these, even though they recalled scenes in which the voluptuous beauty of Matilda shone paramount, were as blots upon the fair picture of the past, and he fain would have banished them from his mind for ever.

The letter on which the American was now engaged, Grantham had recognized, from its fold and seal, to be one he had written prior to parting with her, as he had supposed, for ever. While he was yet dwelling on this singularity, Matilda threw the letter upon the table at her side, and leaning her head upon her hand, seemed as if musing deeply upon its contents. The contraction of her brow became deeper, and there was a convulsed pressure of her lips as of one forming some determination, requiring at once strong *moral and* physical energy to accomplish. A cold shudder *crept through* the veins of Gerald, for too well did he fancy

he could divine what was passing in the soul of that strange yet fascinating woman. For a moment a feeling of almost loathing came over his heart, but when, in the next moment, he saw her rise from the sofa, revealing the most inimitable grace, he burned with impatience to throw himself reckless of consequences at her feet, and to confess his idolatry.

After pacing to and fro for some moments, her dark and kindling eye alone betraying the excitement which her colorless cheek denied, Matilda again took up the light, and having once more approached the portrait, was in the act of raising the veil, when a slight noise made by Gerald, who in his anxiety to obtain a better view of her, had made a change in his position, arrested her ear; and she turned and fixed her eye upon the window, not with the disturbed manner of a person who fears observation, but with the threatening air of one who would punish an intrusion.

Holding the light above her head, she advanced firmly across the room, and stopping beneath the window, fixed her eye steadily and unshrinkingly upon it. The mind of Gerald had become a chaos of conflicting and opposing feelings. Only an instant before and he would have coveted recognition, now his anxiety was to avoid it; but cramped in his attitude, and clinging as he was compelled, with his face close to the bars, his only means of doing so was by quitting his position altogether. He therefore loosened his hold, and dropped himself on the mound of earth from which he had contrived to ascend, but not so noiselessly, in the unbroken stillness of the night, as to escape the keen ear of the American. In the next moment Gerald heard a door open, and a well known voice demand, in tones which betrayed neither alarm nor indecision.

"Who is there?"

The question was repeated in echo from the surrounding woods, and then died away in distance.

"Who of my people," again demanded Matilda, "has *dared to follow* me here in defiance of my orders?"

Another echo of indistinct sounds, and all again was still.

"Whoever you are, speak," resumed the courageous girl. "Nay," she pursued more decidedly, as having moved a pace or two from the door, she observed a human form standing motionless beneath the window. "Think not to escape me. Come hither slave that I may know you. This curiosity shall cost you dear."

The blood of Gerald insensibly chilled at the harsh tone in which these words were uttered, and had he followed a first impulse he would at once have retired from the influence of a command, which under all the circumstances, occurred to him as being of prophetic import. But he had gazed on the witching beauty of the syren, until judgment and reason had yielded the rein to passion, and filled with an ungovernable desire to behold and touch that form once more—even although he should the next moment tear himself from it for ever—he approached and stood at the entrance of the temple, the threshold of which Matilda had again ascended.

No exclamation of surprise escaped the lips of the ever-collected American; and yet, for the first time that night, her cheek was suffused with a deep glow, the effect of which was to give to her whole style of beauty a character of radiancy.

"Gerald Grantham!"

"Yes, Matilda," exclaimed the youth, madly heedless of the past, while he rivetted his gaze upon her dazzling loveliness with such strong excitement of expression as to cause her own to sink beneath it, "your own Gerald—your slave kneels before you," and he threw himself at her feet.

"And what punishment does not that slave merit?" she asked, in a tone so different from that in which she had addressed her supposed domestic, that Gerald could scarcely believe it to be the same. "What reparation can he make *for having* caused so much misery to one who loved and *cherished him so* well. Oh! Gerald, what days, what nights

of misery, have I not passed since you so unkindly left me." As she uttered the last sentence, she bent herself over the still kneeling form of her lover, while her long dark hair, falling forward, completely enveloped him in its luxuriant and waving folds.

"You will be mine, Matilda," at length murmured the youth, as he sat at her side on the sofa, to which on rising he had conducted her.

"Yours, only yours," returned the American, while she bent her face upon his shoulder. "But you know the terms of our union."

Had a viper stung him, Gerald could not have recoiled with more dismay and horror from her embrace. Again the features of Matilda became colorless, and her brow assumed an expression of care and severity.

"Then, if not to fulfil that compact, wherefore are you here?" and the question was put half querulously, half contemptuously.

"Chance, Destiny, Fate,—call it what you will," cried Gerald, obeying the stronger impulse of his feelings, and clasping her once more to his beating heart. "Oh! Matilda, if you knew how the idea of that fearful condition has haunted me in my thoughts by day, and my dreams by night, you would only wonder that at this moment I retain my senses, filled as my soul is with maddening—with inextinguishable love for you."

"And do you really entertain for me that deep, that excessive passion you have just expressed," at length observed Matilda, after some moments of silence, and with renewed tenderness of voice and manner, "and yet refuse the means by which you may secure me to you for ever?"

"Matilda," said Gerald, with vehemence, "my passion for you is one which no effort of my reason can control; but let me not deceive you—it is *now* one of the senses."

An expression of triumph, not wholly unmingled with

scorn, animated the features of Matilda. It was succeeded by one of ineffable tenderness.

"We will talk of this no more tonight, Gerald, but to-morrow evening, at the same hour, be here: then our mutual hopes, and fears, and doubts shall be then realized or disappointed, as the event may show. Tomorrow will determine if, as I cannot but believe, Destiny has sent you to me at this important hour. It is very singular," she added, as if to herself, her features again becoming deadly pale—"very singular, indeed!"

"What is singular, Matilda?" asked Gerald.

"You shall know all tomorrow," she replied; "but mind," and her dark eye rested on his with an expression of much tenderness, "that you come prepared to yield me all I ask."

Gerald promised that he would, and Matilda, expressing a desire to hear what had so unexpectedly restored him to her presence, he entered into a detail of all that had befallen him from the moment of their separation. She appeared to be much touched by the relation, and, in return, gave him a history of what she too had felt and suffered. She, moreover, informed him that Major Montgomerie had died of his wound shortly after their parting, and that she had now been nearly two months returned to her uncle's estate at Frankfort, where she lived wholly secluded from society, and with a domestic establishment consisting of slaves. These short explanations having been entered into, they parted—Matilda to enter her dwelling, (the same Gerald had remarked in outline,) in which numerous lights were now visible, and her lover to make the best of his way to the town.

CHAPTER XII.

Morning dawned, and yet no sleep had visited the eyes of Gerald Grantham. The image of Matilda floated in his mind, and, to the recollection of her beauty, he clung with an aching eagerness of delight that attested the extent of its influence over his imagination. Had there been nothing to tarnish that glorious picture of womanly perfection, the feelings it called up would have been too exquisite for endurance; but alas! with the faultless image, came also recollections, against which it required all the force of that beauty to maintain itself. One ineffaceable spot was upon the soul of that fascinating being; and though, like the spots on the sun's disk, it was hidden in the effulgence which surrounded it, still he could not conceal from himself that it *did* exist, to deface the symmetry of the whole. It was his knowledge of that fearful blemish that had driven him to seek in drunkenness, and subsequently in death, a release from the agonizing tortures of his mind. Virtue and a high sense of honor had triumphed so far, as not merely to leave his own soul spotless, but to enable him to fly from her who would have polluted it with crime; yet, although respect and love—the pure sentiments by which he had originally been influenced—had passed away, the hour of their departure had been that of the increased domination of passion, and far from her whose beauty was ever present to his mind, his imagination had drawn and lingered on such pictures, that assured as he was they could never be realized, he finally resolved to court death wherever it might present itself.

Restored thus unexpectedly to the presence of her who had been the unceasing subject of his thoughts, and under circumstances so well calculated to inflame his imagination, it cannot

appear wonderful that Gerald should have looked forward to his approaching interview with emotions of the intensest kind. How fated, too, seemed the reunion. He had quitted Matilda with the firm determination never to behold her more, yet, by the very act of courting that death which would fully have accomplished his purpose, he had placed himself in the position he most wished to avoid. Presuming that Major Montgomerie, who had never alluded to Frankfort as his home, was still with his niece a resident in the distant State in which he had left them—he had gladly heard Colonel Forrester name the Kentucky capital as the place of his destination; for, deep and maddening as was his passion for Matilda, no earthly considerations could have induced him voluntarily to have sought her. Even since his arrival in Frankfort, it had been a source of consolation to him to feel that he was far removed from her who could have made him forget that, although the heart may wither and die, while self-esteem and an approving conscience remain to us, the soul shares not in the same decay—confesses not the same sting. Could he even have divined that in the temple to which his curiosity had led him, he should have beheld the being on whose image he doted, even while he shunned it, he would have avoided her as a pestilence.

The result of this terrible struggle of his feelings was a determination to see her once more—to yield up his whole soul to the intoxication of her presence, and then, provided she should still refuse to unite her fate to his, unhampered by the terrible condition of past days, to tear himself from her for ever.

Strong in this resolution, Gerald, to whom the hours had appeared as days since his rising, and who quitted Frankfort about his usual time, and, in order to avoid observation, took the same retired and circuitous route by which he had reached the valley the preceding evening. As he descended *into the plain*, the light from the window of the temple was *again perceptible*—In a few minutes he was in the room.

"Gerald—my own Gerald," exclaimed Matilda, as carefully closing the door after her lover, she threw herself into his embrace. Alas, weak man! Like the baseless fabric of a dream, disappeared all the lately formed resolutions of the youth.

"Yes! Matilda, your own Gerald. Come what will henceforth, I am yours."

A pause of some moments ensued, during which each felt the beating of the other's heart.

"Will you swear it, Gerald?" at length whispered Matilda.

"I will—I do swear it."

There was a sudden kindling of the dark eye of the American, and an outswelling of the full bust, that seemed to betoken exultation in the power of her beauty; but this was quickly repressed, and sinking on the sofa at the side of her lover, her whole countenance was radiant with the extraordinary expression Gerald had, for the first time, witnessed while she lingered on the arm of his uncle, Colonel D'Egville.

"Gerald," she said tenderly, "confirm the oath which is to unite us heart and soul, in one eternal Destiny. Swear upon this sacred volume, that your hand shall avenge the wrongs of your Matilda—of your wife. Ha! your wife, think of that," she added with sudden energy.

Gerald caught the book eagerly to his lips. "I swear it, Matilda—he shall die."

But scarcely had he sworn, when a creeping chill passed through his frame. His features lost all their animation, and throwing away the book on which the impious oath had been taken, he turned away his face from Matilda, and sinking his head upon his chest, groaned and wept bitterly.

"What! already Gerald, do you repent? Nay, tell me not that one thus infirm of purpose, can be strong of passion. You love me not, else would the wrongs of her you love arm you with the fiercest spirit of vengeance against him who

has so deeply injured her. But, if you repent, it is but to absolve you from your oath, and then the deed must be my own."

The American spoke in tones in which reproach, expostulation, and wounded affection, were artfully and touchingly blended, and as she concluded, she too dropped her head upon her chest and sighed.

"Nay, Matilda, you do me wrong. It is one thing to swerve from the guilty purpose to which your too seductive beauty has won my soul, another to mourn as man should mourn, the hour when virtue, honor, religion, all the nobler principles in which my youth has been nurtured, have proved too weak to stem the tide of guilty passion. You say I love you not!" and he laughed bitterly. What greater proof would you require than the oath I have just taken?"

"It's fulfilment," said Matilda, impressively.

"It shall be fulfilled," he returned quickly, "but at least deny me not the privilege of cursing the hour when crime of so atrocious a dye could be made so familiar to my soul."

"Crime is a word too indiscriminately bestowed," said Matilda, after a momentary pause. "What the weak in mind class with crime, the strong term virtue."

"Virtue! what, to spill the blood of a man who has never injured me; to become a hired assassin, the price of whose guilt is the hand of her who instigates to the deed? If this be virtue, I am indeed virtuous."

"Never injured you!" returned the American, while she bent her dark eyes reproachfully upon those of the unhappy Gerald. "Has he not injured *me;* injured beyond all power of reparation, her who is to be the partner of your life?"

"Nay, Matilda," and Gerald again passionately caught and enfolded her to his heart, "that image alone were sufficient to mould me to your will, even although I had not before resolved. And yet," he pursued, after a short pause, "*how base,* how terrible to slay an unsuspecting enemy.

Would we could meet in single combat—and why not? Yes it can—it shall be so. Fool that I was not to think of it before. Matilda, my own love, rejoice with me, for there is a means by which your honor may be avenged, and my own soul unstained by guilt. I will seek this man, and fasten a quarrel upon him. What say you, Matilda—speak to me, tell me that you consent." Gerald gasped with agony.

"Never, Gerald," she returned, with startling impressiveness, while the color, which during the warm embrace of her lover had returned to it once more, fled from her cheek. "To challenge him would be but to ensure your own doom, for few in the army of the United States equal him in the use of the pistol or the small sword; and, even were it otherwise," she concluded, her eye kindling into a fierce expression, "were he the veriest novice in the exercise of both, my vengeance would be incomplete, did he not go down to his grave with all his sins on his head. No, no, Gerald, in the fulness of the pride of existence must he perish. He must not dream of death until he feels the blow that is aimed at his heart."

The agitation of Matilda was profound beyond any thing she had ever yet exhibited. Her words were uttered in tones that betrayed a fixed and unbroken purpose of the soul, and when she had finished, she threw her face upon the bosom of her lover, and ground her teeth together with a force that showed the effect produced upon her imagination, by the very picture of the death she had drawn.

A pause of some moments ensued. Gerald was visibly disconcerted, and the arm which encircled the waist of the revengeful woman dropped, as if in disappointment, at his side.

"How strange and inconsistent are the prejudices of man," resumed Matilda, half mournfully, half in sarcasm; "here is a warrior—a spiller of human life by profession; his sword has been often dyed in the heart blood of his fellow *man, and yet he shudders at the thought of adding one mur-*

der more to the many already committed. What child-like weakness!"

"Murder! Matilda; call you it murder to overcome the enemies of one's country in fair and honorable combat, and in the field of glory?"

"Call *you* it what you will—disguise it under whatever cloak you may—it is no less murder. Nay, the worst of murders, for you but do the duty of the hireling slayer. In cold blood, and for a stipend, do you put an end to the fair existence of him who never injured you in thought or deed, and whom, under other circumstances, you would perhaps have taken to your heart in friendship."

"This is true, but the difference of the motive, Matilda? The one approved of heaven and of man, the other alike condemned of both."

"Approved of man, if you will; but that they have the sanction of heaven, I deny. Worldly policy and social interests alone have drawn the distinction, making the one a crime, the other a virtue; but tell me not that an all wise and just God sanctions or approves the slaying of his creatures because they perish, not singly at the will of one man, but in thousands and tens of thousands at the will of another. What is there more sacred in the brawls of Kings and Potentates, that the blood they cause to be shed in torrents for some paltry breach of etiquette, should sit more lightly on their souls than the few solitary drops, spilt by the hand of revenge, on that of him whose existence is writhing under a sense of acutest injury?"

The energy with which she expressed herself, communicated a corresponding excitement to the whole manner and person of Matilda. Her eye sparkled and dilated, and the visible heaving of her bosom told how strongly her own feelings entered into the principles she had advocated. Never did her personal beauty shine forth more triumphantly *or seducingly* than at the moment when her lips were giving *utterance to* sentiments from which the heart recoiled.

"Oh Matilda," sighed Gerald, "with what subtlety of argument do you seek to familiarize my soul with crime. But the attempt is vain. Although my hand is pledged to do your will, my heart must ever mourn its guilt."

"Foolish Gerald," said Matilda; "why should that seem guilt to you, a man, which to me, a woman, is but justice; but that unlike me you have never entered into the calm consideration of the subject. Yes,"she pursued with greater energy, "what you call subtlety of argument is but force of conviction. For two long years have I dwelt upon the deed, reasoning, and comparing, until at length each latent prejudice has been expelled, and to avenge my harrowing wrongs appeared a duty as distinctly marked as any one contained in the decalogue. You saw me once, Gerald, when my hand shrank not from what you term the assassin's blow, and had you not interfered then, the deed would not now remain to be accomplished."

"Oh, why did I interfere? why did my evil Genius conduct me to such a scene. Then had I lived at least in ignorance of the fearful act."

"Nay, Gerald, let it rather be matter of exultation with you that you did. Prejudiced as you are, this hand (and she extended an arm so exquisitely formed that one would scarce even have submitted it to the winds of Heaven) might not seem half so fair, had it once been dyed in human blood. Besides who so proper to avenge a woman's wrongs upon her destroyer, as the lover and the husband to whom she has plighted her faith for ever? No, no, it is much better as it is; and fate seems to have decreed that it should be so, else why the interruption by yourself on that memorable occasion, and why, after all your pains to avoid me, this our final union, at a moment when the wretch is about to return to his native home, inflated with pride and little dreaming of the fate that awaits him—Surely, Gerald, you will admit there is something more than mere chance in this?"

"About to return," repeated Grantham shuddering. "When, Matilda?"

"Within a week at the latest—perhaps within three days. Some unimportant advantage which he has gained on the frontier,has been magnified by his generous fellow citizens into a deed of heroism, and, from information conveyed to me, by a trusty and confidential servant, I find he has obtained leave of absence, to attend a public entertainment to be given in Frankfort, on which occasion a magnificent sword, is to be presented to him. Never, Gerald," continued Matilda her voice dropping into a whisper,while a ghastly smile passed over and convulsed her lips, "never shall he live to draw that sword. The night of his triumph is that which I have fixed for mine."

"An unimportant advantage upon the frontier," asked Gerald eagerly and breathlessly. "To what frontier, Matilda, do you allude?

"The Niagara," was the reply.

"Are you quite sure of this?"

"So sure that I have long known he was there," returned Matilda.

Gerald breathed more freely—but again he questioned:

"Matilda, when first I saw you last night, you were gazing intently upon yon portrait, (he pointed to that part of the temple where the picture hung suspended,) and it struck me that I had an indistinct recollection of the features."

"Nothing more probable," returned the American, answering his searching look with one of equal firmness. You cannot altogether have forgotten Major Montgomerie."

"Nay, the face struck me not as his. May I look at it?"

"Assuredly. Satisfy yourself."

Gerald quitted the sofa, took up the light, and traversing the room raised the gauze curtain that covered the painting. It was indeed the portrait of the deceased Major, habited in *full* uniform.

"How strange," he mused, "that so vague an impression should have been conveyed to my mind last night, when now I recal without difficulty those well remembered features." Gerald sighed as he recollected under what different circumstances he had first beheld that face, and dropping the curtain once more, crossed the room and flung himself at the side of Matilda.

"For whom did you take it, if not for Major Montgomerie?" asked the American after a pause, and again her full dark eye was bent on his.

"Nay I scarcely know myself, yet I had thought it had been the portrait of him I have sworn to destroy."

There was a sudden change of expression in the countenance of Matilda, but it speedily passed away, and she said with a faint smile.

"Whether is it more natural to find pleasure in gazing on the features of those who have loved, or those who have injured us?"

"Then whose was the miniature on which you so intently gazed, on that eventful night at Detroit?" asked Gerald.

"That," said Matilda quickly, and paling as she spoke—"that was *his*—I gazed on it only the more strongly to detest the original—to confirm the determination I had formed to destroy him."

"If *then*," returned the youth, "why not *now*—may I not see that portrait Matilda? May I not acquire some knowledge of the unhappy man whose blood will so shortly stain my soul?"

"Impossible," she replied. "The miniature I have since destroyed. While I thought the original within reach of my revenge, I could bear to gaze upon it, but no sooner had I been disappointed in my aim, than it became loathsome to me as the sight of some venemous reptile, and I destroyed it." This was said with undisguised bitterness.

Gerald sighed deeply. Again he encircled the waist of

his companion, and one of her fair, soft, velvet hands was pressed in his.

"Matilda," he observed, "deep indeed must be the wrong that could prompt the heart of woman to so terrible a hatred. When we last parted you gave me but an indistinct and general outline of the injury you had sustained. Tell me now all—tell me every thing," he continued with energy, "that can infuse a portion of the hatred which fills your soul into mine, that my hand may be firmer—my heart more hardened to the deed.

"The story of my wrongs must be told in a few words, for I cannot bear to linger on them," commenced the American, again turning deadly pale, while her quivering lips and trembling voice betrayed the excitement of her feelings. The monster was the choice of my heart—judge how much so when I tell you that, confiding in *his* honor, and in the assurance that our union would take place immediately, surrendered to him *mine*. A constant visitor at Major Montgomerie's, whose brother officer he was, we had ample opportunities of being together. We were looked upon in society as affianced lovers, and in fact it was the warmest wish of Major Montgomerie that we should be united. A day had even been fixed for the purpose, and it wanted, but eight and forty hours of the time, when an occurrence took place which blasted all prospect of our union for ever.

"I have already told you, I think," resumed Matilda, "that this little temple had been exclusively erected for my own use. Here however my false lover had constant ingress, and being furnished with a key, was in the habit of introducing himself at hours when, having taken leave of the family for the evening, he was supposed by Major Montgomerie and the servants to have retired to his own home. On the occasion to which I have just alluded, *I had understood* from him some business, connected with

our approaching marriage, would detain him in the town to an hour too advanced to admit of his paying me his usual visit. Judge my surprise, and indeed my consternation, when at a late hour of the night I heard the lock of the door (from which I had removed my own key) turn, and my lover appear at the entrance.

There was a short pause, and Matilda again proceeded.

"Scarcely had he shown himself when he had again vanished, closing the door with startling violence. I sprang from the sofa and flew forth after him, but in vain. He had already departed, and with a heart sinking under an insurmountable dread of coming evil, I once more entered the temple, and throwing myself upon the sofa, gave vent to my feelings in an agony of tears."

"But why his departure, and whence your consternation?" asked Gerald, whose curiosity had been deeply excited.

"I was not alone," resumed Matilda, in a deep and solemn voice. "When he entered I was hanging on the neck of another.

Gerald gave a half start of dismay, his arm dropped from the waist of the American, and he breathed heavily and quickly.

Matilda remarked the movement, and a sickly and half scornful smile passed over her pale features. "Before we last parted, Gerald, I told you, not only that I was in no way connected with Major Montgomerie by blood, but that I was the child of obscure parents."

"What then?"

"The man on whose neck I hung was my own father."

"It was Desborough!" said the youth, with an air and in a voice of extreme anguish.

"It was," returned Matilda, her face crimsoning as she reluctantly acknowledged the parentage. "But how knew you it?"

"Behold the proof," exclaimed Gerald, with uncontrollable bitterness, as he drew from his bosom the portrait of a

child which, from its striking resemblance, could be taken for no other than her to whom he now presented it."

"This is indeed mine," said Matilda, mournfully. "It was taken for me, as I have since understood, in the very year when I was laid an orphan and a stranger at the door of that good man, who calling himself my uncle, has been to me through life a more than father. Thank God," she pursued with greater animation, her large dark eyes upturned, and sparkling through the tears that forced themselves upwards, "thank, God he at least lives not to suffer through the acts of his adopted child. Where got you this, Gerald?" she proceeded, when after a short struggle she had suceeded in overcoming her emotion.

Gerald, who in his narrative of events, had purposely omitted all mention of Desborough, now detailed the occurrence at the hut, and concluded what the reader already knows, by stating that he had observed and severed from the settler, as he slept heavily on the floor, the portrait in question, which, added to the previous declaration of Matilda as to the obscurity of her birth, connected with other circumstances on board his gun boat, on his trip to Buffalo, had left an impression little short of certainty that he was indeed the father of the woman whom he so wildly loved."

For some minutes after this explanation there was a painful silence, which neither seemed anxious to interrupt—at length Gerald asked.

"But what had a circumstance, so capable of explanation, to do with the breaking off of your engagement, Matilda, or, did he, more proud—perhaps I should say less debased—than myself, shrink from uniting his fate with the daughter of a murderer?"

"True," said Matilda, musingly; "you have said, I think, that he slew your father. This thirst for revenge then would seem hereditary. *That* is the only, because it is *the noblest*, inheritance I would owe to such a being."

"*But* your affair with your lover, Matilda—how terminated

that?" demanded Gerald with increasing paleness, and in a faltering tone.

"In his falsehood and my disgrace. Early the next morning I sent to him, and bade him seek me in the temple at the usual hour. He came, but it was only to blast my hopes—to disappoint the passion of the woman who doated upon him. He accused me of a vile intercourse with a slave, and almost maddened me with ignoble reproaches. It was in vain that I swore to him most solemnly, the man he had seen was my father; a being whom motives of prudence compelled me to receive in private, even although my heart abhorred and loathed the relationship between us. He treated my explanation with deriding contempt, bidding me either produce that father within twenty-four hours, or find some easier fool to persuade that one, wearing the hue and features of the black could, by human possibility, be the parent of a white woman. Again I explained the seeming incongruity, by urging that the hasty and imperfect view he had taken was of a mask, imitating the features of a negro, which my father had brought with him as a disguise, and which he had hastily resumed on hearing the noise of the key in the door. I even admitted, as an excuse for seeing him thus clandestinely, the lowly origin of my father, and the base occupation he followed of a treacherous spy who, residing in the Canadas, came, for the mere consideration of gold, to sell political information to the enemies of the country that gave him asylum and protection. I added that his visit to me was to extort money, under a threat of publishing our consanguinity, and that dread of his (my lover's) partiality being decreased by the disclosure, had induced me to throw my arms, in the earnestness of entreaty upon his neck, and implore his secrecy; promising to reward him generously for his silence. I moreover urged him, if he still doubted, to make inquiry of Major Montgomerie, and ascertain from him whether I was not indeed the niece of his adoption, and not of his blood. Finally I humbled myself in the dust and, like

a fawning reptile, clasped his knees in my arms, entreating mercy and justice. But no," and the voice of Matilda grew deeper, and her form became more erect; "neither mercy nor justice dwelt in that hard heart, and he spurned me rudely from him. Nothing short of the production of him he persisted in calling my vile paramour, would satisfy him; but my ignoble parent had received from me the reward of his secrecy, and he had departed once more to the Canadas. And thus," pursued Matilda, her voice trembling with emotion, "was, I made the victim of the most diabolical suspicion that ever haunted the breast of man."

Gerald was greatly affected. His passion for Matilda seemed to increase in proportion with his sympathy for her wrongs, and he clasped her energetically to his heart.

"Finding him resolute in attaching to me the debasing imputation," pursued the American, "it suddenly flashed upon my mind, that this was but a pretext to free himself from his engagemeut, and that he was glad to accomplish his object through the first means that offered. Oh, Gerald, I cannot paint the extraordinary change that came over my feelings at this thought; much less give you an idea of the rapidity with which that change was effected. One moment before and, although degraded and unjustly accused, I had loved him with all the ardour of which a woman's heart is capable: *now* I hated, loathed, detested him; and had he sunk at my feet, I would have spurned him from me with indignation and scorn. I could not but be conscious that the very act of having yielded myself up to him, had armed my lover with the power to accuse me of infidelity, and the more I lingered on the want of generosity such a suspicion implied, the more rooted became my dislike, the more profound my contempt for him, who could thus repay so great a proof of confidingness and affection."

"It was even while I lay grovelling at his feet," pursued *Matilda*, after a momentary pause, during which she evinced *intense agitation*, "that this sudden change (excited by this

most unheard of injustice) came over my mind—I rose and stood before him; then asked, in a voice in which no evidence of passion could be traced, what excuse he meant to make to Major Montgomerie, for having thus broken off his engagement. He started at my sudden calmness of manner, but said that he thought it might be as well for my sake to name, what I had already stated to him, in regard to the obscurity of my birth, as a plea for his seceding from the connexion. I told him that, under all the circumstances, I thought this most advisable, and then pointing to the door, bade him begone, and never under any pretext whatever again to insult me with his presence. When he had departed, I burst into a paroxysm of tears, but they were tears shed not for the loss of him I now despised, but of wild sorrow at my umerited degradation. That conflict over, the weakness had for ever passed away, and never since that hour, has tear descended cheek of mine, associated with the recollection of the villain who had thus dared to trifle with a heart, the full extent of whose passions he has yet to learn."

There was a trembling of the whole person of Matilda, which told how much her feelings had been excited by the recollection of what she narrated, and Gerald, as he gazed on her beautiful form, could not but wonder at the apathy of the man who could thus have heartlessly thrown if from him for ever.

"Had the injury terminated here," resumed Matilda, "bitter as my humiliation was, my growing dislike for him who had so ungenerously inflicted it, might have enabled me to endure it. But, not satisfied with destroying the happiness of her who had sacrificed all for his sake, my perfidious lover had yet a blow in reserve for me, compared with which his antecedent conduct was mercy. Gerald," she continued, as she pressed his arm with a convulsive grasp, "will you believe that the monster had the infamy to confide to one of his most intimate associates, that his rupture with me was *occasioned* by his having discovered me in the arms of

a slave--of one of those vile beings communion with whom my soul in any sense abhorred? How shall I describe the terrible feeling that came over my insulted heart at that moment. But no, no--description were impossible. This associate—this friend of his—dared, on the very strength of this infamous imputation, to pollute my ear with his disrespectful passion, and when, in a transport of contempt and anger, I spurned him from me, he taunted me with that which I believed confined to the breast, as it had been engendered only in the suspicion, of my betrayer. Oh! if it be dreadful to be falsely accused by those whom we have loved in intimacy, how much more so it to know that they have not had even the common humanity to conceal our supposed weakness from the world. From that moment revenge took possession of my soul, and I swore that my destroyer should perish by the hand of her whose innocence and whose peace he had blasted for ever."

"Shortly after this event," resumed Matilda, "my base lover was ordered to join his Regiment then stationed at Detroit. A year passed away, and during that period, my mind pondered unceasingly on the means of accomplishing my purpose of revenge; and so completely did I devote myself to a cool and unprejudiced examination of the subject, that what the vulgar crowd term guilt, apeared to me plain virtue. On the war breaking out, Major Montgomerie was also ordered to join the Regiment at Detroit, and thither I entreated him, to suffer me to accompany him. He consented, for knowing nothing of the causes which had turned my love into gall, he thought it not improbable that a meeting with my late lover might be productive of a removal of his prejudices, and our consequent reunion. Little did he dream that it was with a view to plunge a dagger into my destroyer's false heart, that I evinced so much eagerness to undertake so long, and so disagreeable a journey."

"*Little* more remains to be added," pursued Matilda, as she fixed her dark eyes with a softened expression on those of

Gerald, "since, with the occurrences at Detroit you are already sufficiently acquainted. Yet there is one point upon which I would explain myself. When I first became your prisoner, my mind had been worked up to the highest pitch of determination, and in my captor I at first beheld but an evil Genius who had interposed himself between me and my just revenge, when on the very eve of its consummation. Hence my petulance and impatience while in the presence of your noble General."

"And whence that look Matilda, that peculiar glance, which you bestowed upon me even within the same hour?"

Because in your frank and fearless mien I saw that manly honor and fidelity, the want of which had undone me; besides it flashed across my mind that daring, such as I have witnessed yours in the capture of our boat, might, if enlisted in my behalf, securely accomplish my revenge.

"Then, if so, why the cold, the mortifying reserve, you manifested when we met at dinner at my uncle's table?"

"Because I had also recollected that, degraded as I was, I ought not to seek the love of an honorable man, and that to win you to my interest would be of no avail, as, separated by the national quarrel, you could not, by possibility, be near to aid me in my plans."

"Then," said Gerald reproachfully, "it was merely to make me an instrument of vengeance that you sought me. Unkind Matilda!"

"Nay, Gerald,—recollect, that then I had not learnt to know you as I do now—I will not deny that when first I saw you, a secret instinct told me you were one whom I would have deeply loved had I never loved before; but betrayed and disappointed as I had been, I looked upon all men with a species of loathing—my kind, good, excellent, more than father, excepted—and yet, Gerald, there were moments when I wished even him dead." (Gerald started)—"yes! dead—because I knew the anguish that would crush his heart *if he should* ever learn that the false brand of the as-

sassin had been affixed to the brow of his adopted child." Matilda sighed profoundly, and then resumed. "Later however, when the absence of its object had in some degree abated the keenness of my thirst for revenge, and when more frequent intercourse had made me acquainted with the generous qualities of your mind, I loved you Gerald, although I would not avow it, with a fervor I had never believed myself a second time capable of entertaining."

Again the countenance of Matilda was radiant with the expression just alluded to by her lover. Gerald gazed at her as though his very being hung upon the continuance of that fascinating influence, and again he clasped her to his heart.

"Matilda! oh my own betrothed Matilda!" he murmured

"Yes your own betrothed," repeated the American highly excited, the wife of your affection and your choice, who has been held up to calumny and scorn. Think of that, Gerald; she on whose fond bosom you are to repose your aching head, she who glories in her beauty only because it is beauty in your eyes, has been, betrayed, accused of a vile passion for a slave; yet he—the fiend who has done this grievous wrong—he who has stamped your wife with ignominy, and even published her shame—still lives. Within a week," she resumed, in a voice hoarse from exertion. "Yes, within a week, Gerald, he will be here--perhaps to deride and contemn you for the choice you have made."

"Within a week he dies," "exclaimed the youth. "Matilda, come what will, he dies. Life is death without you, and with you even crime may sit lightly on my soul But we will fly far from the habitations of man. The forest shall be our home, and when the past recurs to me you shall smile upon me with that smile--look upon me with that look, and I will forget it all. Yes" he pursued, with a fierce excitement snatching up the holy book, and again carrying it to his lips—"once more I repeat my oath. He who has thus *wronged* you, my own Matilda, dies—dies by the hand of *Gerald Grantham*—of your affianced husband."

There was another long embrace, after which the plan of operations was distinctly explained and decided upon. They then separated for the night—the infatuated Gerald with a load of guilt at his heart, no effort of his reason could remove, returning by the route he had followed on the preceding evening to his residence in the town.

CHAPTER XIII.

LEAVING the lost Gerald for a time to all the horrors of his position, in which it would be difficult to say whether remorse or passion (each intensest of its kind) predominated, let us return to the scene where we first introduced him to the reader, and take a review of the Military events passing in that quarter.

After the defeat of the British columns at Sandusky, so far from any renewed attempt being made to interrupt the enemy in his strong holds, it became a question whether the position on the Michigan frontier could be much longer preserved. To the perseverance and promptitude of the Americans, in bringing new armies into the field, we have already had occasion to allude; but there was another quarter in which their strength had insensibly gathered, until it eventually assumed an aspect that carried apprehension to every heart. Since the loss of their flotilla at Detroit, in the preceding year, the Americans had commenced with vigour to equip one at Buffalo, which, in number and weight of metal, was intended to surpass the naval force on Lake Erie; and so silently and cautiously had they accomplished this task, that it was scarcely known at Amherstburg that a squadron was in the course of preparation, when that squadron (to which had been added the schooner captured from Gerald Grantham the preceding autumn) suddenly appeared off the harbour, defying their enemies to the combat. But the English vessels were in no condition to cope with so powerful an enemy, and although many a gallant spirit burned to be led against those who so evidently taunted them, the safety of the

Garrisons depended too much on the issue, for that issue to be lightly tempted.

But misfortune was now beginning to overcast the hitherto fair prospects of the British arms in the Western District of the Canadas; and what the taunts of an enemy, triumphing in the consciousness of a superior numerical force, could not effect, an imperative and miserably provided for necessity eventually compelled. Maintaining as we did a large body of wild and reckless warriors, together with their families, it may be naturally supposed the excesses of these people were not few; but it would have required one to have seen, to have believed, the prodigal waste of which they were often guilty. Acknowledging no other law than their own will, following no other line of conduct than that suggested by their own caprice, they had as little respect for the property of the Canadian inhabitant as they would have entertained for that of the American enemy. And hence it resulted, that if an Indian preferred a piece of fresh, to the salted meat daily issued from the Commissariat, nothing was more common than for him to kill the first head of cattle he found grazing on the skirt of the forest; secure the small portion he wanted; and leave the remainder to serve as carrion to the birds of prey of the country. Nay, to such an extent was this wanton spoliation carried, that instances have repeatedly occurred wherein cattle have been slain and left to putrify in the sun, merely because a warrior found it the most convenient mode by which to possess himself of a powder horn. All this was done openly—in the broad face of day, and in the full cognizance of the authorities; yet was there no provision made to meet the difficulties so guilty a waste was certain eventually to entail. At length the effect began to make itself apparent, and it was shortly after the first appearance of the American fleet that the scarcity of food began to be so severely felt as to compel the English squadron, at all hazards, to leave the port in search of supplies.

At this period, the vessel described in the commencement of our story, as having engaged so much of the interest and attention of all parties, had just been launched and rigged. Properly armed she was not, for there were no guns of the description used on ship board wherewith to arm her ; but now that the occasion became imperative, all nicety was disregarded in the equipment ; and guns that lately bristled from the ramparts of the fort were soon to be seen protruding their long and unequal necks from the ports. She was a gallant ship, notwithstanding the incongruity of her armament, and had her brave crew possessed but the experience of those who are nursed on the salt waves of ocean, might have fought a more fortunate fight (a better or a braver was impossible) than she did. But in the whole of the English fleet there could not be counted three score able or experienced seamen ; the remainder were children of the Canadian Lakes, warm with the desire to distinguish themselves in the eyes of their more veteran European companions, but without the knowledge to make their enthusiasm sufficiently available. The Americans, on the contrary, were all sons of the ocean.

It was a glorious day in September, the beautiful September of Canada, when the gallant Commodore Barclay sailed with his fleet, ostensibly in fulfilment on the mission for which it was dispatched, but in reality under the firm expectation of being provoked to action by his stronger and better disciplined enemy. To say that he would have sought that enemy, under the disadvantages beneath which he knew himself to labor, would be to say that which would reflect little credit on his judgment; but, although not in a condition to hold forth the flag of defiance, where there was an inferiority in all but the skill of the leader and the personal courage of the men, he was not one to shun the battle that should be forced upon him. Still to him it was an *anxious moment*, because the fame of other days hung upon *an issue over* which no efforts of his own could hold mastery,

and as he gazed at his armless sleeve, he sighed for the presence of those whose agency had coupled the recollection of past victory with that mutilated proof of honorable conduct. He knew, moreover, the magnitude of the stake for which he was thus compelled to play, and that defeat to him would be the loss of the whole of the Western District. While the British ascendancy could be maintained on the Lake, there was little fear, lined as the forests were with Indian warriors, that the Americans would push any considerable force beyond the boundaries they had assigned themselves at Sandusky and on the Miami; but a victory once obtained by their fleet, there could be nothing to oppose the passage of their army in vessels and boats across the Lake.

Such were the thoughts that filled the mind of the Commodore (in common with all who calmly reasoned on the subject) as he crossed the bar that separated him from his enemy; but neither in look, nor word, nor deed, was there aught to reveal what was passing in the inward man; and when later the hostile fleet was signalized as bearing down upon them, he gave his orders to prepare for action, in the animated voice of one who finds certain victory within his reach, and exultingly hastens to secure it.

The events of that day the page of History has already recorded in terms alike flattering to the conqueror and the conquered. Let it suffice that the Americans triumphed. What the issue would have been, independently of all the disadvantages under which the English Commodore labored, had the latter not been borne severely wounded to his cabin early in the action, it is impossible to say; but as the final defeat was owing to his two principal vessels getting foul of each other, without being able to extricate themselves, it is not unfair to presume that his presence on deck would have done much to remedy the confusion produced by the accident.

One incident only connected with this action, and in which two individuals with whom our readers have made partial

acquaintance, were the principal performers, we will venture to relate. It will be recollected that at the dinner table at Colonel D'Egville's on the day of the capture of Major Montgomerie, and his party, among the guests were the chiefs Split-log and Walk-in-the-Water, the former distinguished by a huge bulbous excrescence miscalled a nose, and exquisitely slit ears that dangled gracefully upon his shoulders, at every movement of his Memnon-like head: the latter by his striking resemblance to the puritans of the days of the Commonwealth. Now it so happened that Messieurs Split-log and Walk-in-the-water were filled with an unconquerable desire to distinguish themselves at sea, as they had often done on *terra firma*, and they accordingly proffered their services in the forth-coming struggle. We hope we shall not be considered as detracting in the slightest degree from the courage of these chiefs, when we state that the position chosen by them on board the Commodore's ship, was one where they apprehended the least danger to themselves—namely in the tops; for although an Indian will scorn to shrink from a rifle bullet or tomahawk, it by no means enters into his code of bravery that he is to submit himself to the terrible ordeal of being battered to a jelly by a huge globe of solid iron. With an alertness not common to the habits and corpulence of these celebrated chiefs, and fully calculating on exemption from danger while they plied their rifles successfully themselves, they ascended to the main top long before the action commenced. But they had counted without their host, for no sooner did the enemy begin to suffer from their fire, and perceive the quarter whence it came, when a swivel gun, loaded with grape, was brought to bear upon the point where they lay concealed. They had provided themselves with a breast work against small arms, but no breast work could resist the shower of iron hail that was directed towards them; and in proportion as the splinters and shot flew about their *ears*, so did their desire to distinguish themselves oze forth *from the* palms of Messrs. Split-log and Walk-in-the-Water;

in so much so indeed that, without waiting to descend the rigging in the usual manner, each abandoning his rifle, slid down by the first rope on which he could lay his hands ; nor stayed his course until he found himself squatted, out of all reach of danger in the lowest hold, and within the huge coils of a cable where already lay ensconced a black bear, the pet of one of the sailors. In this comfortable hiding place were Messrs Split-log and Walk-in-the-Water found, when at the close of the action they became, in common with those with whose fortunes they had identified themselves, prisoners of the Americans.

The action between the adverse fleets had been witnessed by many of the inhabitants of Amherstburg, and by the officers of the Garrison who, at the first sounds of conflict, had ridden along the banks of the lake to be as near spectators of the event as the distance of the combatants, and the thick smoke in which they speedily became enveloped, would allow. High in hope, and strong in the reliance they placed upon the skill and experience of the English Commodore, each had looked forward with confidence to the overthrow of the enemy, even with the limited means and unequal resources placed at his disposal. Great therefore was the disappointment of all, when after the firing, which raged for two hours without intermission, had finally ceased, they found the English squadron lay a mere wreck upon the waters, and in the very act of being towed by their more fortunate enemies into the harbour they had but recently quitted to engage them. But on none did the disappointment of that hour sit more heavily than on Tecumseh. He had watched the whole conflict with an anxious eye and a swelling heart, for he well knew what important results to himself and kindred hung upon the issue ; but filled with enthusiastic admiration as he was of the Naval Captain, he had believed that personal devotedness and heroism alone were sufficient to compensate for the absence of advantages he had heard named, without fully comprehending either their import or

their influence upon the chances of victory. The event painfully undeceived him, and although his generous heart warmed with the same love for him whose valour, profitless even though it proved, was sufficiently attested by the shattered condition of almost every vessel of his little Squadron, he read in the downfall of him in whose aid he had so much confided, the annihilation of the English power in that remote region of the Canadas, and the consequent destruction of all his hopes of retrieving his race from the hated thraldom of American tyranny and American usurpation. Such was the first feeling of that noble Warrior, but his was not a soul to despoud under the infliction of even a worse trial than that just recorded, and in proportion as the danger and difficulty increased, so rose his energy and his desire to surmount them.

The result of the unlucky contest was, as had been anticipated, to open a free passage across the lake to the American armies, whose advance by land had been so repeatedly and effectually checked on former occasions, as to leave them little inclination for a renewal of an attempt in that quarter. Now however that they could forward a fleet of boats, under cover of the guns of their Squadron, to the very outworks of Amherstburg, the difficulty was at once removed; and an overwhelming army of not less than ten thousand men, were speedily assembled near Sandusky, with a view to the final invasion of Amherstburg and consequent recapture of Detroit.

Under these disheartening circumstances—the want of provisions being daily more and more felt by the troops and inhabitants—it became necessary to hold a council of war, to determine upon the course that should be pursued. Accordingly the whole of the chiefs and officers of the Garrison met in the hall already described in the beginning of our narrative, when it was proposed by General Proctor, at the conclusion of a speech in which the increasing difficulties and privations of the garrison were emphatically enumerated,

that the fortifications should be razed to the ground, the dock yards and other public works destroyed, and the allied forces of English and Indians make the best of their way by land to join the centre division of the army on the Niagara frontier.

The indignation of Tecumseh, at what he conceived to be a base and cowardly abandonment of a position which stout hearts and willing hands might yet make available against any force the enemy should push forward for its reduction, was excessive and appropriately expressed. Filled with esteem as he was for the character and courage of General Brock, while a no less sincere admiration of the gallant but unfortunate Commodore Barclay animated his noble and generous heart, he could ill disguise his contempt for the successor of the former. Little familiarized as he was with the habits of European warfare, it could not escape the penetrating observation of such a mind, that the man who now proposed giving up his command without a struggle in its defence, was the same who, at French town, had suffered his troops to be cut to pieces, through mere nervousness to attack with the bayonet; and who, later at Sandusky, had through grossest neglect and ignorance, not only lost the means of securing a certain victory, but occasioned the most shameful waste of human life; neither had it escaped his observation that on almost every occasion wherein the hostile armies were brought in contact, he who called himself a leader was invariably a follower, and a follower at a most respectful distance—a mode of heading an army, so differing from Tecumseh's own view of the duties of a great chief, that he could not understand by what perversion of the judgment of his really brave fellows, who were erroneously called his followers, he had been suffered to continue in his command so long.

Under this impression of feeling towards the General, it may readily be supposed that Tecumseh was not sparing of *his censure* on the mode of proceeding which had been

suggested by that officer—nay, he even carried his contempt and indignation so far, as to term him the coward he believed him to be; and had this merit, that he told, in plain and unvarnished language, what many of the English officers most religiously believed also, although their tongues dared not of course give utterance to the thought. He threw additional force into his spirited and exciting speech, by instituting a comparison between him to whom he addressed himself, and the gallant but unfortunate officer whose defeat had driven them to the necessity of debating the unworthy question of flight—a comparison which tended but to show how high the one had been raised, how low the other had been sunk, in the estimation of the truly brave; and concluded by a vivid expression of his determination to remain with his warriors and maintain the contest alone.

The animated delivery of the Warrior had communicated to the lesser chiefs an enthusiasm of approbation that carried them wholly beyond the bounds of the quiet and grave demeanor, so usually distinguishing their deliberative assemblies; and like the wild outburst of a fitful storm, rose the clamorous yells that told how responsively the heart of each excited chief beat to that of his great leader. There was a moment during that wild and tumultuous expression of the common feeling, when the British officers looked as if they expected some more serious results of the General's proposition than the mere utterance of the dissatisfaction it had created. But the apprehension soon passed away, for a sudden and commanding movement of the proud Tecumseh stayed the tempest his own powerful eloquence had raised, —and the quiet and order of the scene were restored, with a promptitude not inferior to that with which it had been interrupted.

The result of the proceedings of the day, was a compromise of the views of the two parties; and it was *decided, that* although the defences of Amherstburg and Detroit *should be* destroyed, and those forts evacuated, a final stand

should be made near the Moravian village, on the banks of the narrow river Thames, on the line of communication with the Niagara frontier. If the opportunity permitted, and the Americans suffered them to remain unmolested, fortifications were to be constructed on this spot, and a rallying point for the numerous tribes of dispersed Indians finally preserved.

A few days later, and the work of destruction was entered upon and soon completed. The little British Army, scarcely exceeding eight hundred men of all arms, commenced its march at night, lighted by the flames of the barracks which had given them shelter for the last time. As they passed the fort of Detroit the next day, dense columns of smoke and flame were to be seen rising high in air, from the various public edifices, affording a melancholy evidence of the destruction which usually tracks a retreating army. Many an American inhabitant looked on at the work of destruction, as if he would fain have arrested the progress of an element which at once defaced the beauty of the town, and promised much trouble and inconvenience to those whom they knew to be at hand, for their final deliverance from the British yoke. But the Garrison continued stern spectators of the ruin they had been compelled to effect, until the flames had attained a power which rendered their suppression an impossibility; then and then only, did they quit the scene of conflagration, and embarking in the boats which had been kept in readiness for their transport, joined their comrades, who waited for them on the opposite bank. The two Garrisons thus united; the whole preceded by a large body of Indians, were pushed forward to the position which had been selected on the Thames, and both shores of the Detroit were left an unresisting conquest to the Americans.

Meanwhile, these latter had not been slow in profiting by the important advantages which had crowned their arms on the lake. On the third day after the retreat of the British Garrison from Amherstburg, a numerous fleet of large boats was discovered from the town pushing for Hartley's point, under

cover of the united Squadrons. Unopposed as these were, their landing was soon effected, and a few hours later the American stars were to be seen floating over the still smoking ruins of the British fortress. Emboldened by the unexpected ease with which he had rendered himself finally master of a position so long coveted, the American General at once resolved to follow and bring his retreating enemy to action if possible. A force of five thousand men (fifteen hundred of whom were mounted rifles) was accordingly pushed forward; and so rapid and indefatigable was the march of these, that they came up with the retreating columns before they had succeeded in gaining the village, at which it was purposed that their final stand should be made. The anxiety of General Proctor to save the baggage waggons containing his own personnal effects, had been productive of the most culpable delay, and at the moment when his little army should have been under cover of entrenchments, and in a position which offered a variety of natural defensive advantages, they found themselves suddenly overtaken by the enemy in the heart of a thick wood, where, fatigued by the long and tedious march they had made under circumstances of great privation, they had scarcely time to form in the irregular manner permitted by their broken position, before they found themselves attacked with great spirit, and on all sides by a force more than quadruple their own. The result may easily be anticipated. Abandoned by their General, who at the very first onset, drove his spurs into the flanks of his charger and fled disgracefully from the scene of action, followed by the whole of his personal staff, the irregularly formed line of the little British Army, was but ill prepared to make effectual resistance to the almost invisible enemy by whom it was encompassed; and those whom the rifle had spared, were to be seen, within an hour from the firing of the first shot, standing conquered and disarmed, between the closing lines of the victorious Americans.

But although the English troops (sacrificed as they must

be pronounced to have been, by their incapable leader) fell thus an easy prey to the overwhelming force brought against them, so did not their Indian allies, supported and encouraged as these were by the presence of their beloved Chieftain. It was with a sparkling eye and a glowing cheek that, just as the English troops had halted to give unequal battle to their pursuers, Tecumseh passed along the line, expressing in animated language the delight he felt at the forthcoming struggle, and when he had shaken hands with most of the officers (we fancy we can feel the generous pressure of his fingers even at this remote period) he moved into the dense forest where his faithful bands were lying concealed, with a bounding step that proved not only how much his heart had been set upon the cast, but how completely he confided in the result. And who shall say what that result might not have been even notwithstanding the discomfiture of the English had the heroic Chieftain been spared to his devoted country! But this was not fated to be. Early in the action he fell by the hand of a distinguished leader of the enemy,* and his death carried, as it could not fail to do, the deepest sorrow and dismay into the hearts of his followers, who although they continued the action long after his fall, and with a spirit that proved their desire to avenge the loss of their noble leader, it was evident, wanted the directing genius of him they mourned to sustain them in the effort. For several days after the action did they continue to hang upon the American rear, as the army again retired with its prisoners upon Detroit; but each day their attack became feebler and feebler, announcing that their numbers were fast dispersing into the trackless region from which they had been brought, until finally not a shot was to be heard disturbing the night vigils of the American sentinels.

With the defeat of the British army, and the death of Tecumseh, perished the last hope of the Indians to sustain

* *Colonel Johnson*, now Vice-President of the United States.

themselves as a people against the inroads of their oppressors. Dispirited and dismayed, they retired back upon the hunting grounds which still remained to them, and there gave way both to the deep grief with which every heart was overwhelmed at the loss of their truly great leader, and to the sad anticipations which the increasing gloom that clouded the horizon of their prospects naturally induced.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE interview so fatal in its results to Gerald's long formed resolutions of virtuous purpose was followed by others of the same description, and in the course of these, Matilda, profiting by her knowledge of the past, had the address so to rivet the chains which fettered the senses of her lover, by a well timed, although apparently unintentional display of the beauty which had enslaved him, that so far from shrinking from the fulfilment of the dreadful obligation he had imposed upon himself, the resolution of the youth became more confirmed as the period for its enactment drew nigher. There were moments when, (his passion worked up to intensity by the ever-varying, over-exciting picture of that beauty, would have anticipated the condition on which he was to become possessed of it for ever, but on these occasions the American would assume an air of wounded dignity, sometimes of deep sorrow; and alluding to the manner in which her former confidence had been repaid, reproach him with a want of generosity, in seeking to make her past weakness a pretext for his present advances. Yet even in the very moment she most denied him, she so contrived that the restrained fire should burn with tenfold fury within his heart—rendering him hourly more anxious for her possession, even as he became hourly less fastidious about the means of attainment.

At length the day arrived when Gerald—the once high, generous and noble minded Gerald,—was to steep his soul in guilt—to imbrue his hands in the life blood of a fellow creature. The seducer of Matilda had arrived, and even in the *hotel in which* Grantham resided, the entertainment was to

be given by his approving fellow citizens, in commemoration of the heroism which had won to him golden opinions from every class. It had already been arranged that the assassination was to take place on the departure of their victim from the banquet, and consequently at a moment when, overcome by the fumes of wine, he would be found incapable of opposing any serious resistance to their design. The better to facilitate his close and unperceived approach to the unhappy man, a pair of cloth shoes had been made for her lover by the white hands of Matilda, with a sort of hood or capuchin of the same material, to prevent recognition by any one who might accidentally pass him on the way to the scene of the contemplated murder. Much as Gerald objected to it, Matilda had peremptorily insisted on being present herself, to witness the execution of the deed, and the same description of disguise had been prepared for herself. In this resolution the American, independently of her desire to fortify the courage of her lover by her presence, was actuated by another powerful and fearful motive, which will be seen presently.

The private residence of the officer was situated in a remote part of the town, and skirting that point of the circular ridge of hills where the lights in the habitation of Matilda had attracted the notice of Gerald, on the first night of his encounter. To one who viewed it from a distance, it would have seemed that the summit of the wood-crowned ridge must be crossed before communication could be held between the two dwellings which lay as it were back to back, on either side of the formidable barrier; but on a nearer approach, a fissure in the hill might be observed, just wide enough to admit of a narrow horse track or foot path, which wound its sinuous course from the little valley into the open space that verged upon the town, on gaining which the residence of the American officer was to be seen rising at the distance of twenty yards. It was in this path, which had been *latterly* pointed out to him by his guilty companion, that Ge-

rald was to await the approach of the intended victim, who on passing his place of concealment, was to be cautiously followed and stabbed to the heart ere he could gain his door.

Fallen as was Gerald from his high estate of honor, it was not without a deep sense of the atrocity of the act he was about to commit that he prepared for its accomplishment. It is true that, yielding to the sophistry of Matilda's arguments, he was sometimes led to imagine the avenging of her injuries an imperative duty; but such was his view of the subject only when the spell of her presence was upon him. When restored to his calmer and more unbiassed judgment, in the solitude of his own chamber, conscience resumed her sway, and no plausibility of pretence could conceal from himself that he was about to become that vilest of beings—a common murderer. There were moments even when the dread deed to which he had pledged himself appeared in such hideous deformity that he fain would have fled on the instant far from the influence of her who had incited him to its perpetration, but when the form of Matilda rose to his mental eye, remorse, conscience, every latent principle of virtue, dissolved away, and although he no longer sought to conceal from himself that what he meditated was crime of the blackest dye, his determination to secure entire possession of that beauty, even at the accursed price of blood, became but the more resolute and confirmed.

The night previous to that fixed for the assassination was passed by the guilty Gerald in a state of dreadful excitement. Large drops fell from his forehead in agony, and when he arose at a late hour, his pale emaciated features and wavering step betrayed how little the mind or the body had tasted of repose. Accustomed however, as he had latterly been, to sustain his sinking spirits by artificial means, he was not long in having recourse to his wonted stimulants. He called for brandy to deaden the acuteness of his feelings, and give strength to his tottering limbs; and when he had drank freely of this, he sallied forth into the forest, where he wandered

during the day without other aim or purpose than to hide the brand of guilt, which he almost felt upon his brow, from the curious gaze of his fellow men. It was dark when he returned to the hotel, and as, on his way to his own private apartment, he passed the low large room chiefly used as an ordinary, the loud hum of voices which met his ear, mingled with the drawing of corks and ringing of glasses, told him that the entertainment provided for his unconscious victim had already commenced. Moving hastily on, he gained his own apartment, and summoning one of the domestics, directed that his own frugal meal (the first he had tasted that day) should be brought up. But even for this he had no appetite, and he had recourse once more to the stimulant for assistance. As the night drew on he grew more nervous and agitated, yet without at all wavering in his purpose. At length ten o'clock struck. It was the hour at which he had promised to issue forth to join Matilda in the path, there to await the passage of his victim to his home. He cautiously descended the staircase, and in the confusion that reigned among the household, all of whom were too much occupied with the entertainment within to heed the movements of individuals, succeeded in gaining the street without notice. The room in which the dinner was given was on the ground floor, and looked through numerous low windows into the street, through which Gerald must necessarily pass to reach the place of his appointment. Sounds of loud revelry, mixed with laughter and the strains of music, now issued from these, attesting that the banquet was at its height, and the wine fast taking effect on its several participators.

A momentary feeling of vague curiosity caused the degraded youth to glance his eye through one of the uncurtained windows upon the scene within, but scarcely had he caught an indistinct and confused view of the company, most of whom glittered in the gay trappings of military uniforms, when a secret and involuntary dread of distinguishing from his fellows the man whom he was about to slay, caused him as

instantaneously to turn away. Guilty as he felt himself to be, he could not bear the thought of beholding the features of the individual he had sworn to destroy. As there were crowds of the humbler citizens of the place collected round the windows to view the revelry within, neither his appearance nor his action had excited surprise; nor indeed was it even suspected, habited as he was in the common garments of the country, that he was other than a native of the town.

On gaining the narrow pass or lane, he found Matilda wrapped in her cloak, beneath which she carried the disguise prepared for both. The moon was in the last quarter, and as the fleecy clouds passed away from before it, he could observe that the lips and cheek of the American were almost livid, although her eyes sparkled with deep mental excitement. Neither spoke, yet their breathing was heavy and audible to each. Gerald seated himself on a projection of the hill, and removing his shoes, substituted those which his companion had wrought for him. He then assumed the hood, and dropping his head between his hands, continued for some minutes in that attitude, buried in profound abstraction.

At length Matilda approached him. She seated herself at his side, threw her arms around his neck, called him in those rich and searching tones which were so peculiarly her own —her beloved and affianced husband; and bidding him be firm of purpose, as he valued the lives and happiness of both, placed in his hand a small dagger, the handle of which was richly mounted in silver. Gerald clutched the naked weapon with a convulsive grasp, while a hoarse low groan escaped him, and again he sank his head in silence upon his chest.

Nearly an hour had passed in this manner, neither seeking to disturb the thoughts of the other, nor daring to break the profound silence that every where prevailed around them. At length a distant and solitary footstep was heard, and Matilda sprang to her feet, and with her head thrown eagerly forward, while one small foot alone supported the whole

weight of her inclined body, gazed intently out upon the open space, and in the direction whence the sounds proceeded.

"He comes, Gerald, he comes;" she at length whispered in a quick tone.

Gerald, who had also risen, and now stood looking over the shoulder of the American, was not slow in discovering the tall figure of a man, whose outline, cloaked even as it was, bespoke the soldier, moving in an oblique direction towards the building already described.

"It is he, too well do I know him," continued Matilda, in the same eager yet almost inaudible whisper, "and mark how inflated with the incense which has been heaped upon him this night does he appear. His proud step tells of the ambitious projects of his vile heart. Little does he imagine that this arm (and she tightly grasped that which held the fatal dagger) will crush them for ever in the bud. But hist!"

The officer was now within a few paces of the path, in the gloom of which the guilty pair found ample concealment, and as he drew nearer and nearer their very breathing was stayed to prevent the slightest chance of a discovery of their presence. Gerald suffered him to pass some yards beyond the opening, and advanced with long yet cautious strides across the grass towards his victim. As he moved thus noiselessly along, he fancied that there was something in the bearing of the figure that reminded him of one he had previously known, but he had not time to pause upon the circumstance, for the officer was already within ten yards of his own door, and the delay of a single moment would not only deprive him of the opportunity on which he had perilled all in this world and in the next, but expose himself and his companion to the ignominy of discovery and punishment.

A single foot of ground now intervened between him and the unhappy officer, whom wine, or abstraction, or both, had rendered totally unconscious of his danger. Already was the hand of Gerald raised to strike the fatal blow—another moment and

it would have descended, but even in the very act he found his arm suddenly arrested. Turning quickly to see who it was who thus interfered with his purpose, he beheld Matilda.

"One moment stay," she said in a hurried voice; "poor were my revenge indeed, were he to perish not knowing who planned his death;" then in a hoarser tone, in which could be detected the action of the fiercest passions of the human mind.—"Slanderer—villain—we meet again."

Startled by the sound of a familiar voice, the officer turned hastily round, and seeing all his danger at a single glance, made a movement of his right hand to his side, as if he would have grasped his sword—but finding no weapon there he contented himself with throwing his left arm forward, covered with the ample folds of his cloak, with a view to the defence of his person.

"Yes, Forrester," continued Matilda, in the same impassioned voice, "we meet again, and mark you," pulling back the disguise from Gerald, "'tis no vile slave, no sable paramour by whose hand you die—villain," she pursued, her voice trembling with excitement, "my own arm should have done the deed, but that he whose service I have purchased with the hand you rejected and despised, once baulked me of my vengeance when I had deemed it most secure. But enough! To his heart, Gerald, now that in the fulness of his wine and his ambition, he may the deeper feel the sting of death—strike to his heart—what! do you falter—do you turn coward?"

Gerald neither moved nor spoke; his upraised hand had sunk at his side, at the first address of Matilda to her enemy, and the dagger had fallen from his hand upon the sward, where it might be seen glittering in the rays of the pale moon. His head was bent upon his chest in abject shame, and he seemed as one who had suddenly been turned to stone.

"Gerald, my husband!" urged Matilda, rapidly changing her tone into that of earnest persuasion, "wherefore do you *hesitate.* Am I not your wife, your own wife, and is not

yon monster the wretch who has consigned my fair fame to obloquy for ever—Gerald!" she added impetuously.

But the spell had lost its power, and Gerald continued immoveable—apparently fixed to the spot on which he stood.

"Gerald, Gerald!" repeated the officer, with the air of one endeavouring to recollect.

At the sound of that voice, Gerald looked up. The moon was at that moment unobscured by a single cloud, and as the eyes of the murderer and his intended victim met, their recognition was mutual and perfect.

"I had never expected to see Lieutenant Grantham figuring in the character of an assassin," said Colonel Forrester, in a voice of deep and bitter reproach, "still less to find his arm raised against the preserver of his life. This," he continued, as if speaking to himself, "will be a bitter tale to recount to his family."

"Almighty God! have mercy!" exclaimed Gerald, as overcome with shame and misery, he threw himself upon the earth at his full length, his head nearly touching the feet of the officer. Then clasping his feet—"Oh! Colonel Forrester, lost, degraded as I am, believe me when I swear that I knew not against whom my arm was to be directed. Nay, that you live at this moment is the best evidence of the truth of what I utter, for I came with a heart made up to murder. But *your* blood worlds could not tempt me to spill."

"I believe you," said the American, feelingly. "Well do I know the arts of the woman who seems to have lured you into the depths of crime; yet low as you are fallen, Lieutenant Grantham—much as you have disgraced your country and profession, I cannot think you would willingly have sought the life of him who saved your own. And now rise, sir, and gain the place of your abode, before accident bring other eyes than my own to be witnesses of your shame. We will discourse of this tomorrow. Meanwhile, be satisfied with my *promise*, that your attempt shall remain a secret with myself."

While he spoke, Colonel Forrester made a movement as if to depart. Aroused by the apprehension of losing her victim, Matilda, who had hitherto been an impatient listener, called wildly upon Gerald, who had now risen, to fulfil his compact; but the youth turned from her with a movement of disgust, exclaiming with bitterness—"leave me, woman, leave me!"

Matilda looked after him for an instant with an expression of intensest scorn, then springing to, and snatching up the dagger, which lay glittering a few paces from the spot on which she stood, she advanced silently, but rapidly, upon her retreating enemy. Colonel Forrester had gained his threshhold, and had already knocked for admittance, when he heard the deep voice of Matilda at his ear, exclaiming in a triumphant tone,

"Think you twice then to escape your doom, traitor?"

Before he could make an attempt to shield himself, the fatal steel had entered deep into his side. Uttering a groan, he sank senseless on the steps, whither Gerald, who had watched the action of his companion, had flown in the hope of arresting the blow. Confused voices, mingled with the tramp of feet, were now heard within the hall. Presently the door opened, and a crowd of servants, chiefly blacks, appeared with lights. The view of their bleeding master, added to the disguise of Gerald, and the expression of triumph visible in the pale countenance of Matilda, at once revealed the truth. By some the former was borne to his apartment, while the greater portion busied themselves in securing the two latter, who however made not the slightest effort at resistance, but suffered themselves to be borne, amid hootings and execrations, from the spot.

The different groups we have described as being gathered together in front of the hotel, had dispersed with the breaking up of the party, which Colonel Forrester, in compliment to those who entertained him, had been one of the last to quit; so that on passing through the streets not an idler was found to

swell the sable crowd that bore the wretched prisoners onward to the common prison of the town. Just as they had arrived at this latter, and a tall and muscular negro, apparently enjoying some distinction in his master's household, was about to pull the bell for admission, a man came running breathlessly to the spot, and communicated to the negro just mentioned, a message, in which the name of Colonel Forrester was distinctly audible to the ear of Gerald. A retrogade movement was the immediate consequence of this interruption, and the party, came once more upon the open space they had so recently quitted. Stupified with the excess of abjectness in which he had continued plunged, from the moment of his discovery of the identity of his intended victim, Gerald had moved unconsciously and recklessly whithersoever his conductors led; but now that he expected to be confronted face to face with the dying man, as the sudden alteration in the movement of the party gave him reason to apprehend, he felt for the first time that his position, bitter as it was, might be rendered even worse. It was a relief to him, therefore, when he found that, instead of taking the course which led to the residence of Colonel Forrester, the head of the party, of which Matilda and himself were the centre, suddenly immerged into the narrow lane which conducted to the residence of that unhappy woman. Instead, however, of approaching this, Gerald remarked that they made immediately for the fatal temple. When they had reached this, the door was unlocked by the tall negro above described, who, with a deference in his manner not less at variance with the occasion than with the excited conduct of the whole party on their way to the prison, motioned both his prisoners to enter. They did so, and the lock having been turned and the key removed, they silently withdrew.

CHAPTER XV.

Hours passed away without either of the guilty parties finding courage or inclination to address the other. The hearts of both were too full for utterance—and yet did they acknowledge no sympathy in common. Remorse, shame, fear, regret, simultaneously assailed and weighed down the mind of Gerald. Triumphant vengeance, unmixed with any apprehension of self, reigned exclusively in the bosom of Matilda. The intense passion of the former, like a mist that is dissipitated before the strong rays of the sun, had yielded before the masculine and practical display of the energetic hate of its object, while on the contrary she, whose beauty of person was now to him a thing without price, acknowledged no other feeling than contempt for the vacillating character of her associate. In this only did they agree that each looked upon each in the light of a being sunk in crime—steeped in dishonor—and while the love of the one was turned to almost loathing at the thought, the other merely wondered how one so feeble of heart had ever been linked to so determined a purpose.

The only light admitted into the temple was through the window already described, and this was so feeble as scarcely to allow of the more distant objects in the room being seen. Gradually, as the moon sunk beneath the forest ridge, the gloom increased, until in the end the darkness became almost profound. At their first entrance Matilda, enshrouding herself in the folds of her cloak, had thrown herself upon the sofa; while Gerald continued to pace up and down the apartment with hurried steps, and in a state of feeling it would be a

vain attempt to describe. It was now for the first time that, uninfluenced by passion, the miserable young man had leisure to reflect on the past, and the chain of fatality which had led to his present disgracefnl position. He recollected the conversation he had held with his brother on the day succeeding his escape from the storm ; and as the pledge which had been given in his name to his dying father, that no action of his life should reflect dishonor on his family now occurred to him in all its force, he groaned in agony of spirit, less in apprehension of the fate that awaited him than in sorrow and in shame that that pledge should have been violated. By a natural transition of his feelings, his imagination recurred to the traditions connected with his family, and the dreadful curse which had been uttered by one on whom his ancestor was said to have heaped injury to the very extinction of reason—and associating as he did Matilda's visit to the Cottage at Detroit, on the memorable night when he had unconsciously saved the life of Colonel Forrester, with the fact of her having previously knelt and prayed upon the grave that was known to cover the ashes of the unhappy maniac, Ellen Halloway, he felt a shuddering conviction that she was in some way connected with that wretched woman. In the intenseness of his new desire to satisfy his doubts—a desire which in itself partook of the character of the fatality by which he was beset—he overcame the repugnance he had hitherto felt to enter into conversation with her, and advancing to the couch, seated himself upon its edge at her side.

"Matilda" he said, after a few moments of silence, "by all the love you once bore me, I conjure you answer me one question while yet there is time."

"Fool," returned the American, "I never loved you. A soul like mine feels passion but once. Hitherto I have played a part, but the drama approaches to a close, and disguise of plot is no longer necessary. Gerald Grantham, you

have been my dupe,—you came a convenient puppet to my hands, and as such I used you until the snapped wire proclaimed you no longer serviceable. No further."

Shame, anguish, mortification—all the most humiliating sensations natural to man, for a moment assailed the breast of the unfortunate and guilty Grantham, rendering him insensible even to the greater evil which awaited him. In the bitterness of his agony he struck his clenched hand against his forehead, uttering curses upon himself for his weakness, in one breath, and calling upon his God, in the next, to pardon him for his crime.

"This is good!" said Matilda. "To see you writhe thus, under the wound inflicted upon your vanity, is some small atonement for the base violation of your oath; yet what question would you ask, the solution of which can so much import one about to figure on the scaffold for a crime he has not even had the courage to commit?"

The taunting manner in which the concluding part of the sentence was conveyed, had the effect of restoring Gerald in some degree to himself, and he said with considerable firmness:

"What I would ask is of yourself,—namely, the relationship, if any, you bear to those who lie within the mound on which I beheld you kneeling, on the night of your first attempt on Colonel Forrester's life."

"The very recollection of that ill-timed intrusion would prevent me from satisfying your curiosity, did not something whisper to me that, in so doing, I shall add another pang to those you already experience," returned the American with bitter sarcasm.

"You are right," said Gerald hurriedly; "my miseries need but the assurance of your connexion with those mouldering bones to be indeed complete."

"Then," said Matilda eagerly, and half raising her head, "your cup of misery may yet admit of increase. My mother and my father's mother both sleep within that grave!"

"How knew you this?" demanded Gerald quickly. "Instinct could not have guided you to the spot, and by your own admission you were taken from the place of your home while yet a mere child."

"Not instinct, but my father Desborough, pointed out the spot, as he had long previously acquainted me with the history of my birth."

One question more—your grandmother's name?"

"Mad Ellen she was called, an English soldier's wife, who died in giving birth to my father—and now that you are answered, leave me."

"Almighty Providence," aspirated Gerald, in tones of inconceivable agony; "it is then as I had feared, and this woman has Destiny chosen to accomplish my ruin."

He quitted the sofa and paced up and down the room in a state of mind bordering on distraction. The past crowded upon his mind in all the confused manner of a dream, and amid the chaos of contending feelings by which he was beset, one idea only was distinct—namely, that the wretched woman before him had been but the agent of Fate in effecting his destruction. Strange as it may appear, the idea, so far from increasing the acerbity of his feelings, had the tendency to soften his heart towards her. He beheld in her but a being whose actions had been fated like his own, and although every vestige of passion had fled—even although her surpassing beauty had lost its subjugating influence, his heart yearned towards her as one who, wrecked on the same shore, had some claim to his sympathy and compassion. All that was now left them was to make their peace with God, since with man their final account would be so speedily closed, and with a view to impress her with a sense of the religious aid from which alone they could hope for consolation, he again seated himself at her side on the edge of the sofa.

"Matilda," he said, in a voice in which melancholy and sternness were blended, "We have been the children of guilt

—the victims of our own evil passions; but God is merciful, and if our penitence be sincere, we may yet be forgiven in Heaven, although on earth there is no hope—even if after this we could wish to live. Matilda, let us pray together."

There was no answer—neither did the slightest movement of her form indicate consciousness that she was addressed. "Matilda," repeated Gerald—still there was no answer. He placed his hand upon her cheek, and thought the touch was cold—he caught her hand, it too was cold and but for the absence of rigidity he would have deemed her dead.

Scarcely knowing what he did, yet with an indefinable terror at his heart, he grasped and shook her by the arm, and again, but with greater vehemence, pronounced her name.

"Who calls?" she said, in a faint but deep tone, as she raised her head slowly from the cushion which supported it. "Ha! I recollect. Tell me," she added more quickly, "was not the blow well aimed. Marked you how the traitor fell. Villain, to accuse the woman whose only fault was loving him too well, with ignominious commerce with a slave!"

"Wretched woman," exclaimed Gerald with solemn emphasis, "instead of exulting over the evil we have done, let us rather make our peace with Heaven, during the few hours we have yet to live. Matilda Desborough—daughter of a murderer; thyself a murderess—the scaffold awaits us both."

"Coward—fool—thou liest," she returned with suddenly awakened energy. "For one so changeling as thyself the scaffold were befitting, but know, if I have had the heart to do this deed, I have also had the head to provide against its consequences—see—feel—."

One of her cold hands was extended in search of Gerald's. They met, and a vial placed in the palm of the latter, betrayed the secret of her previous lassitude and insensibility.

Even amid all the horrors which environed him, and call-

ed so largely on attention to his own personal danger, Gerald was inexpressibly shocked.

"What! poisoned?" he exclaimed.

"Yes—poisoned!" she murmured, and her hand again sank heavily at her side.

Gerald dashed the vial away from him to the farther end of the apartment, and taking the cold hand of the unhappy woman, he continued:

"Matilda—is this the manner in which you prepare yourself to meet the presence of your God. What! add suicide to murder?"

But she spoke not—presently the hand he clasped sank heavily from his touch. Then there was a spasmodic convulsion of the whole frame. Then there burst a piercing shriek from her lips, as she half raised herself in agony from the sofa, and then each limb was set and motionless in the stern rigidity of death.

While Gerald was yet bending over the body of his unfortunate companion, shocked, grieved and agitated beyond all expression, the door of the temple was unlocked, and a man enveloped in a cloak, and bearing a small dark lantern, suddenly appeared in the opening. He advanced towards the spot where Gerald, stupified with the events of the past night, stood gazing upon the corpse, almost unconscious of the presence of the intruder.

"A pretty fix you have got into, Liftenant Grantham," said the well known voice of Jackson, "and I little calculated, when I advised you to make love to the Kentucky gals to raise your spirits, that they would lead you into such a deuced scrape as this."

"Captain Jackson," said Gerald imploringly; "I am sufficiently aware of all the enormity of my crime, and am prepared to expiate it; but in mercy spare the bitterness of reproach."

"Now as I'm a true Tenessee man, bred and born, I meant

no reproach, and why should I, since you could'nt help her doing it, (and he pointed to Matilda), yet you know its sometimes dangerous to be found in bad company. Every body might'nt believe you so innocent as we do.

"Innocent! Captain Jackson," exclaimed Gerald, losing sight of all other feelings in unfeigned surprise—"I cannot say that I quite understand you."

"Why, the meaning's plain enough, I take it. Others might be apt, I say, to think you had something to do with the thing as well as she, and therefore its just as well you should make yourself scarce. The Colonel says he would'nt, on any account, you shall even be suspected."

"The Colonel says—not suspected," again exclaimed Gerald with increasing astonishment—then, suddenly recollecting the situation of the latter—"tell me," he continued, "is Colonel Forrester in danger—is his life despaired of?"

"Worth a dozen dead men yet, or you would'nt see me taking the thing so coolly. The dagger certainly let the day light into him, but though the wound was pretty considerably deep, the doctors say its not mortal. He thinks it might have been worse if you had not come up, and partly stopped her arm when she struck at him."

Gerald was deeply affected by what he had just heard. It was evident that Colonel Forrester had, with a generosity to which no gratitude of his own could render adequate justice, sought to exonerate him from all suspicion of participation in the guilty design upon his life, and as he glanced his eye again for a moment upon the lifeless form of his companion, he was at once sensible that the only being who could defeat the benevolent object of his benefactor had now no longer the power to do so.

"She sleeps sound enough now," said Jackson, again pointing to the ill-fated and motionless girl, "but she'll sleep sounder still before long, I take it."

"She will never sleep sounder than at this moment, Captain Jackson," said Gerald, with solemn emphasis.

"Why, you don't mean to say she has cheated the hangman, Liftenant."

As he spoke, Jackson approached the sofa, and turning the light full upon the face, saw indeed that she was dead. Gerald shuddered as the rays from the lamp revealed for the first time the appalling change which had been wrought upon that once beautiful countenance. The open and finely formed brow was deeply knit, and the features distorted by the acute agony which had wrung the shriek from her heart at the very moment of dissolution, were set in a stern expression of despair. The parted lips were drawn up at the corners in a manner to convey the idea of the severest internal pain, and there was already a general discoloration about the mouth, betraying the subtle influence of the poison which had effected her death.

Gerald, after the first glance, turned away his head in horror from the view; but the Aid-de-Camp remained for some moments calmly regarding the remains of all that had once been most beautiful in nature.

"She certainly is not like what she was when Colonel Forrester first knew her," he said, in the abstracted tone of one talking without reference to any other auditor than himself; "but this comes of prefering a nigger to a white man. Such unnatural courses never can prosper, I take it."

"Captain Jackson," said Gerald, aroused by this remark, and with great emphasis of tone, while he laid his hand impressively on the shoulder of the other, "you do her wrong. Guilty she has been, fearfully guilty, but not in the sense you would imply."

"How do you know this?" asked the Aid-de-Camp.

"From her own solemn declaration at a moment when deception could avail her not. Even before she swallowed the fatal poison, her horror at the imputation, which drove her to the perpetration of murder, was expressed in terms of indignant warmth that belong to truth alone."

"If this be so," said Jackson, musingly, "she is indeed

a much injured woman, and deep I know will be the regret of Colonel Forrester when he hears it, for he himself has ever believed her guilty. But come, Liftenant Grantham, we have no time to lose. The day will soon break, and I expect you must be a considerable way from Frankfort before sunrise."

I—from Frankfort—before sunrise!" exclaimed Gerald, in perfect astonishment.

"Why, it's rather short warning to be sure; but the Colonel thinks you'd better start before the thing gets wind in the morning; for as so many of the niggers say you wore a sort of a disguise as well as the poor girl, he fears the citizens may suspect you of something more than an intrigue, and insult you desperately."

"Generous, excellent man!" exclaimed Gerald, "how can I ever repay this most unmerited service?"

"Why, the best way I take it, is to profit by the offer that is made you of getting back to Canada as fast as you can."

"But how is this to be done, and will not the very fact of my flight confirm the suspicion it is intended to remove?"

"As for the matter of how it is to be done, Liftenant, I have as slick a horse waiting outside for you as man ever crossed—one of the fleetest in Colonel Forrester's stud. Then as for suspicion, he means to set that at rest, by saying that he has taken upon himself to give you leave to return on parole to your friends, who wish to see you on a case of life and death, and now let's be moving."

Oppressed with the weight of contending feelings, which this generous conduct had inspired, Gerald waited but to cast a last look upon the ill-fated Matilda; and then with a slow step and a heavy heart for ever quitted a scene fraught with the most exciting and the most painful occurrences of his life. The first rays of early dawn beginning to develope themselves as they issued from the temple, Jackson extinguished his lamp, and leading through the narrow pass that

conducted to the town, made the circuit of the ridge of hills until they arrived at a point where a negro (the same who had led the party that bore Matilda and himself to the temple) was in waiting, with a horse ready saddled and the arms and accoutrements of a rifleman.

The equipment of Gerald was soon completed, and with the shot-bag and powder-horn slung over his shoulder, and the long rifle in his hand, he soon presented the appearance of a backwoodsman hastening to the theatre of war.

When he had seated himself in the saddle, Jackson drew forth a well filled purse, which he said he had been directed by Colonel Forrester to present him with to defray the expences of his journey to the frontier.

Deeply affected by this new proof of the favor of the generous American, Gerald received the purse, saying, as he confided them to the breast of his hunting frock—

"Captain Jackson, tell Colonel Forrester from me, that I accept his present merely because in doing so I give the best evidence of my appreciation of *all* he has done for me on this trying occasion. In his own heart, however, he must look for the only reward to which this most noble of actions justly entitles him."

The frank-hearted Aid-de-Camp promised compliance with this parting message, and after pointing out the route it would be necessary to follow, warmly pressed the hand of his charge in a final grasp, that told how little he deemed the man before him capable of the foul intention with which his soul had been so recently sullied.

How often during those hours of mad infatuation, when his weakened mind had been balancing between the possession of Matilda at the price of crime, and his abandonment of her at that of happiness, had the observation of the Aid-de-Camp, on a former occasion, that he "was never born to be an assassin," occurred to his mind, suffusing his cheek with shame and his soul with remorse. Now, too, that conscious of having fallen in all but the positive commission of

the deed, he saw that the unsuspecting American regarded him merely as one whom accident or intrigue had made an unwilling witness of the deadly act of a desperate woman, his feelings were those of profound abasement and self disesteem.

There was a moment, when urged by an involuntary impulse, he would have undeceived Captain Jackson as to his positive share in the transaction; but pride suddenly interposed and saved him from the degradation of the confession. He returned the pressure of the American's hand with emphasis, and then turning his horse in the direction which he had been recommended to take, quitted Frankfort for ever.

CHAPTER XVI.

While the success of the British and American arms had been alternating (with eventual triumph to the latter) in the manner we have shown during the campaign of 1813, on the Western District of Upper Canada, some highly important operations had taken place in the army of the centre. Of these our space will admit but of a detail of one, and we thus travel out of the scene to which we have hitherto confined our labors, not only because it was the most dashing affair that occurred during the war, but because it offers a striking parallel to the enterprise and daring which destroyed the American power, at the outset of hostilities, and was productive of similar results.

Towards the close of May 1813, the Americans, after having hotly bombarded Fort George on the Niagara frontier, for two successive days, crossed the river and succeeded in establishing themselves in that post which was evacuated as untenable. The British loss on this occasion was considerable, and General Vincent, who commanded the army of the centre, retreated with much precipitation towards Burlington Heights, withdrawing at the same time the garrison from Fort Erie.

Emboldened by the absence of serious opposition, the American Generals (Winder and Chandler) pushed forward a force, exceeding three thousand men, as far as Stoney Creek, close to the position then occupied by the little British army, not more than one fifth of this number. Here they halted for the night, evidently to refresh their troops for the attack, which was meditated for the following morning.

The result of such attack, with so overwhelming a force,

upon a small body of men dispirited, by recent discomfiture, and destitute of supplies or reserves, could scarcely have been doubtful. Fortunately however for the honor of the British arms, Colonel Harvey, to whose conduct on this occasion allusion has been incidentally made in an early chapter of the present volume, had recently joined the centre Division from Lower Canada, and to his quick and comprehensive mind it immediately suggested itself, that if the attack of the American army should be awaited, the result, under the circumstances already alluded to, and in the position occupied by the British force (literally a Cul-de-Sac) must inevitably be attended by their utter discomfiture, if not annihilation. On the contrary, he felt persuaded that, even with the small force at the disposal of the British General, there was every probability that a bold and well concerted night attack would have the effect of restoring to the assailants that confidence in themselves, which had been weakened by a series of reverses, while it must necessarily, and in the same proportion, carry dismay into the ranks of the hitherto victorious enemy.

It was, we believe—indeed we have reason to know—a favorite military maxim with Colonel Harvey, and invariably acted up to whenever opportunity was afforded for its application, that defensive warfare, when the invading foe is greatly superior in number, is best carried on by a succession of bold and active offensive operations. The result of this theory was, in the instance under question, an offer to General Vincent to head a night attack and penetrate into the very heart of the enemy's encampment, as an only means of extricating the army from its perilous position, and restoring (if successful) to the victors that moral confidence which was necessary to the honor of the army, and the preservation of the country. Fortunately, we repeat, for the glory of the British arms, Colonel Harvey's proposal was accepted, although not without much doubt and indecision on the subject, and during the night of the 5th June the small band of heroes, destined to achieve so glorious a result, were silently got under arms for the disproportionate

encounter. At the head of seven hundred and twenty bayonets Colonel Harvey dashed in upon his slumbering and unsuspecting enemy, amounting to more than quadruple his own force, and well provided with field artillery. So bold and unexpected was the attack, that the enemy fled, with the utmost precipitation, to a position called the forty mile creek, a distance of ten miles, leaving their Generals and a vast number of prisoners and military stores in the hands of the victors. Here they fell in with a reinforcement under General Lewis. So opportune however had been the blow struck by Colonel Harvey, and such the panic created by it in the American ranks, that even with this additional force, they, on the sudden appearance of the British fleet, with a small body of troops on board, after sustaining a short cannonade, continued their retreat to Fort George, leaving their tents standing, nor halting until they had gained their place of destination.

Thus, by this judicious and by far the most brilliant achievment of the war, was the centre District freed from the triumphant presence of the enemy, as the western had been, in the preceding year, by the bold and well timed movement of General Brock upon Detroit, with an equally inferior force.

The history of the war furnishes no similar enterprizes. Both were the results of a bold conception, and prompt and successful execution. Of the two, perhaps Stoney Creek was the most dashing and decided, since there the adverse armies actually came into collision.

In October of the same year,* a numerous body of Americans, principally troops of the line, had been collected under the orders of General Van Ransaellar, and advantage was taken of a dark night in October to push them across the river, with a view to the occupation of the commanding heights above the village of Queenston. In this, favored by circumstances, the enemy were eminently successful.—

* The anachronism referred to in the Preface. The events here described, occurred in 1812, and not in 1813.

They carried the batteries, and at day break the heights were to be seen covered with their battalions, before whom were thrown out a considerable body of tirailleurs, or riflemen. At the first alarm, the little detachment stationed at Queenston, marched out to dislodge them; but such was the impatient gallantry of General Brock, who had succeeded to the command on this line of frontier, that without waiting for the main body from Fort George to come up, he threw himself at the head of the flank companies of the Forty-Ninth, and moving forward in double quick time, soon came within sight of the enemy.

Among the General's Aides-de-Camps, was Henry Grantham, who having succeeded in making his escape at the fatal defeat of the Moravian Village, with a few men of his company, had in the absence of his Regiment, (then prisoners of war) and from considerations of personal esteem, been attached as a supernumerary to his staff. With him at this moment was the light hearted De Courcy, and as the young men rode a little in rear of their Chief, they were so rapt in admiration of his fine form and noble daring, (as he still kept dashing onward, far in advance even of the handful of troops who followed eagerly and rapidly in his rear,) that they utterly forgot the danger to which he was exposed.

On arriving at the ascent, the General for a moment reined in his charger, in order to give time to the rear to close in, then removing and waving his plumed hat,

"Hurrah, Forty-Ninth!" he exclaimed, in language suited to those he addressed. "Up these heights lies our road—on ourselves depends the victory. Not a shot till we gain the summit—then three cheers for old England—a volley—and the bayonet must do the rest!"

So saying, he resumed his hat, and wheeling his horse, once more led his gallant little band up the hill.

But it was not likely that the Americans would suffer the approach of so determined an enemy without attempting to check their progress in the most efficient manner. Dis-

tinguished from those around him by his commanding air, not less than by the military insignia that adorned him, the person of the General was at once recognized for one bearing high rank, and as such became an object of especial attention to the dispersed riflemen. Shot after shot flew past the undaunted officer, carrying death into the close ranks that followed noiselessly in his rear, yet without harming him. At length he was seen by his Aides-de-Camps, both of whom had kept their eyes upon him, to reel in his saddle. An instant brought the young men to his side, De Courcy on his right and Grantham on his left hand. They looked up into his face. It was suffused with the hues of death. A moment afterwards and he fell from his horse, with his head reclining upon the chest of Henry Grantham. There was a momentary halt in the advancing column; all were dismayed at the dreadful event.

De Courcy and Grantham, having abandoned their horses, now bore their beloved leader to the side of the road, in order to admit of the unimpeded progress of the men. Even in his last moments the General had no other thought but for the duty in which he was engaged.

"Bid them move on, De Courcy," he said in a faint voice, as he remarked the sudden check which had been given to the advance by his fall. Then, as if obedient to the command, they renewed the ascent, each man eyeing him as he past with a look in which deep sorrow and a desire to avenge his death were intimately blended. "Forty-Ninth, I have served with you from boyhood, and if ye would I die with honor this day—carry those heights."

There was a deep murmur through the ranks of both companies, that showed how each and all were affected by this appealing address of the dying officer. At that moment there arose a loud shout from the hill, as of triumph at the fall of him they mourned. They answered it with the fierce expression of men resolved to turn that shout of triumph into a cry of woe; and excited, maddened, infuriated,

yet with a steadiness of movement that claimed the admiration even of their enemies, dashed, heedless of the galling fire of the riflemen, up the steep.

Left alone with the dying General, it became a first consideration with the young officers to convey him (provided he could bear removal) to some spot out of reach of the enemy's fire, where he might breathe his last moments in peace.

As Henry Grantham glanced his eye towards an old untenanted building, that lay some fifty yards off the road, and which he conceived fully adapted to the purpose, he saw the form of a rifleman partly exposed at a corner of the building, whose action at the moment was evidently that of one in the act of loading his piece. The idea that this skulking enemy might have been the same who had given the fatal death-wound to his beloved Chief, added to the conviction that he was preparing to put the *coup de grâce* to his work, filled him with the deepest desire of vengeance. As the bodies of several men, picked off by the tirailleurs, lay along the road, (one at no great distance from the spot on which he stood,) he hastened to secure the nearest musket, which, as no shot had yet been fired by the English, he knew to be loaded.

Leaving De Courcy to support the head of the General, the young Aid-de-Camp moved with due caution towards the building; but ere he had gone ten paces, he beheld the object of his pursuit issue altogether from the cover of the building, and advance towards him with his rifle at the trail. More and more convinced that his design was to obtain a nearer approach, with a view to a more certain aim, he suddenly halted, and raised the musket to his shoulder. In vain was a shout to desist uttered by the advancing man—in vain was his rifle thrown aside as if in token of the absence of all hostile purpose. The excited Henry Grantham heeded not the words—saw not the action. He thought only of the danger of his General, and of his desire to avenge

his fall. He fired—the rifleman staggered, and putting his hand to his breast—

"My brother! oh, my unhappy brother!" he exclaimed, and sank senseless to the earth.

Who shall tell the horror of the unfortunate young Aid-de-Camp, at recognizing in the supposed enemy his long mourned and much loved Gerald—motion, sense, life, seemed for the instant annihilated by the astounding consciousness of the fratricidal act: the musket fell from his hands, and he who had never known sorrow before, save through those most closely linked to his warm affections, was now overwhelmed, crushed by the mountain of despair that fell upon his heart. It was some moments before he could so far recover from the stupor into which that dear and well remembered voice had plunged him, as to perceive the possibility of the wound not being mortal. The thought acted like electricity upon each stupified sense, and palsied limb; and eager with the renewed hope, he bounded forward to the spot where lay the unfortunate Gerald, writhing in his agony. He had fallen on his face, but as Henry approached him, he raised himself with one hand, and with the other beckoned to his brother to draw near.

"Great God, what have I done!" exclaimed the unhappy Henry, throwing himself in a paroxysm of despair upon the body of his bleeding brother. "Gerald, my own beloved Gerald, is it thus we meet again. Oh! if you would not kill me, tell me that your wound is not mortal. Assure me that I am not a fratricide. Oh, Gerald, Gerald! my brother, tell me that you are not dying."

A faint smile passed over the pale haggard features of Gerald: he grasped the hand of his brother and pressed it fervently, saying—

"Henry, the hand of fate is visible in all this, therefore condemn not yourself for that which was inevitable. I knew of the attempt of the Americans to possess themselves of

the heights, and I crossed over with them under favor of this disguise, determined to find death, combatting at the side of our gallant General. Detaching myself from the ranks, I but waited the advance of the British column to remove from my concealment—you know the rest. But oh, Henry! if you could divine what a relief it is to me to part with existence, you would not wish the act undone. This was all I asked: to see you once more—to embrace you—and to die. Life offered me no hope but this."

Gerald expressed himself with the effort of one laboring under strong bodily pain; and as he spoke he again sank exhausted upon the ground.

"This packet," he continued, taking one from the breast of the hunting frock he wore, and handing it to his brother, who, silent and full of agony, had again raised his head from the ground and supported it on his shoulder; "this packet, Henry, written at various times during the last fortnight, will explain all that has passed since we last parted, in the Miami. When I am no more, read it; and while you mourn over his dishonor, pity the weakness and the sufferings of the unhappy Gerald."

Henry was nearly frantic, the hot tears fell from his burning eyes upon the pale emaciated cheek of his brother—and he groaned in agony.

"Oh, God!" he exclaimed, "how shall I ever survive this blow—my brother! oh, my brother! tell me that you forgive me."

"Most willingly; yet what is there to be forgiven? You took me for an enemy and hence alone your error. It was fate, Henry. A dreadful doom has long been prophesied to the last of our race. We are the last—and this is the consummation. Let it console you however to think that, though your hand had not slain me another's would. In the ranks of the enemy I should have found—Henry, my kind, my affectionate brother—your hand—there—there—what dread-

ful faintness at my heart—Matilda, it is my turn now—Oh, God have mercy, oh——"

While this scene was passing by the road side between the unfortunate brothers, the main body of the British force had come up to the spot where the General still lay expiring in the arms of De Courcy, and surrounded by the principal of the medical staff. The majority of these were of the Regiment previously named—veterans who had known and loved their gallant leader during the whole course of his spotless career, and more than one rude hand might be seen dashing the tear that started involuntarily to the eye. As the colors of the Forty-Ninth passed before him, the General made an effort to address some language of encouragement to his old corps, but the words died away in indistinct murmurs, and waving his hand in the direction of the heights, he sank back exhausted with the effort, and resigned his gallant spirit for ever.

For some minutes after life had departed, Henry Grantham continued to hang over the body of his ill-fated brother, with an intenseness of absorption that rendered him heedless even of the rapid fire of musketry in the advance. The sound of De Courcy's voice was the first thing that seemed to call him to consciousness. De Courcy had heard the cry uttered by the latter, on receiving the fatal shot, and his imagination had too faithfully portrayed the painful scene that had ensued. A friend of both brothers, and particularly attached of late to the younger from the similar nature of their service, he was inexpressibly shocked, but still cherishing a hope that the wound might not be attended with loss of life, he expected to find his anticipations realized by some communication from his friend. Finding however that the one rose not, and remarking that the general demeanour of the other was that of profound despair, he began at length to draw the most unfavorable conclusion, and causing the body of his Commander to be borne under cover of the building, until proper

means of transport could be found, he hastened to ascertain the full extent of the tragedy.

The horror and dismay depicted in his friend's countenance were speedily reflected on his own, when he saw that the unfortunate Gerald, whose blood had completely saturated the earth on which he lay, was indeed no more. Language at such a moment would not only have been superfluous, but an insult. De Courcy caught and pressed the hand of his friend in silence. The unfortunate young man pointed to the dead body of his brother, and burst into tears. While these were yet flowing in a fulness that promised to give relief to his oppressed heart, a loud shout from the British ranks arrested the attention of both. The sound seemed to have an electric effect on the actions of Henry Grantham. For the first time he appeared conscious there was such a thing as a battle being fought.

"De Courcy!" he said starting up, and with sudden animation, "why do we linger here—the dead," and he pointed first to the body of the General in the distance—and then to his brother "the wretched dead claim no service from us now."

"You are right, Henry, our interest in those beloved objects has caused us to be mindless of our duty to ourselves.—See, too, how the flankers have cleared the brow of the hill for the advance of the main body. Victory is our own—but alas! how dearly purchased!"

"How dearly purchased, indeed!" responded Henry, in a tone of such heart-rending agony as caused his friend to repent the allusion. "De Courcy keep this packet, and should I fall, let it be sent to my uncle, Colonel D'Egville."

De Courcy accepted the trust, and the young men mounted their horses, which a Canadian peasant had held for them in the mean time, and dashing up the ascent, soon found themselves where the action was hottest.

Burning with revenge, the flank companies had already succeeded, despite of a hot and incessant fire, in gaining the heights, and here for a considerable time they maintained

the struggle unsupported against the whole force of the enemy. Already their bayonets had cleared for themselves a passage to the more even ground, and the Americans, dismayed at the intrepidity of this handful of assailants, were evidently beginning to waver in their ranks. A shout of victory, which was answered by the main body of the English troops, just then gaining the summit of the hill, completed their disorder. They stood the charge but for a moment, then broke and fled, pursued by their excited enemies in every direction. The chief object of the Americans was to gain the cover of a wood that lay at a short distance in their rear, but a body of militia with some Indians having been sent round to occupy it the moment the landing of the Americans was made known, they were driven back from this their last refuge upon the open ground, and with considerable loss.

Thus hemmed in on both sides—the rifles of the militia and Indians on one hand; the bayonets of the British force on the other—the Americans had no other alternative than throw down their arms or perish to the last. Many surrendered at discretion, and those who resisted were driven at the point of the bayonet, to the verge of the terrific precipices which descend abruptly from the Heights of Queenston. Here their confusion was at the highest—some threw down their arms and were saved, others precipitated themselves down the abyss, where their bodies were afterwards found, crushed and mangled in a manner to render them scarcely recognizable even as human beings.

It was at the moment when the Americans, driven back by the fire from the wood, were to be seen flying in despair towards the frowning precipices of Queenston, that De Courcy and Grantham, quitting their horses at the brow of the hill, threw themselves in front of the victorious and still leading flank companies. Carried away by the excitement of his feelings, Grantham was considerably in advance of his companion, and when the Americans, yielding to the panic

which had seized them, flew wildly, madly, and almost unconcious of the danger, towards the precipice, he suddenly found himself on the very verge, and amid a group of irregulars, who arriving at the brink and seeing the hell that yawned beneath, had turned to seek a less terrific death at the hands of their pursuers. Despair, rage, agony, and even terror, were imprinted on the countenances of these, for they fought under an apparent consciousness of disadvantage, and utterly as men without hope.

"Forward! victory!" shouted Henry Grantham, and his sword was plunged deep into the side of his nearest enemy. The man fell, and writhing in the last agonies of death, rolled onward to the precipice, and disappeared for ever from the view.

The words--the action had excited the attention of a tall, muscular, ferocious looking rifleman, who, hotly pursued by a couple of Indians, was crossing the open ground at his full speed to gain the main body of his comrades. A ball struck him just as he had arrived within a few feet of the spot where Henry stood, yet still leaping onward, he made a desparate blow at the head of the officer with the butt end of his rifle. A quick movement disappointed the American of his aim, yet the blow fell so violently on the shoulder that the stock snapped suddenly asunder at the small of the butt. Stung with pain, Henry Grantham turned to behold his enemy. It was Desborough! The features of the settler expressed the most savage and vindictive passions, as with the barrel of the rifle upraised and clenched in both his iron hands, he was about to repeat his blow. Ere it could descend Grantham had rushed in upon him, and his sword still recking with the blood it had so recently spilt, was driven to the very hilt in the body of the settler. The latter uttered a terrific scream in which all the most infernal of human passions were wildly blended, and casting aside his rifle, seized the young officer in his powerful gripe. Then ensued a contest the most strange and awful; the settler using every

endeavour to gain the edge of the precipice, the other struggling, but in vain, to free himself from his hold. As if by tacit consent, both parties discontinued the struggle, and became mere spectators of the scene.

"Villain!" shouted De Courcy, who saw with dismay the terrible object of the settler, whose person he had recognized —"if you would have quarter, release your hold."

But Desborough, too much given to his revenge to heed the words of the Aid-de-Camp, continued silently, yet with advantage, to drag his victim nearer and nearer to the fatal precipice; and every man in the British ranks felt his blood to creep as they beheld the unhappy officer borne, notwithstanding a desperate resistance, at each moment nigher to the brink.

"For Heaven's sake, advance and seize him" exclaimed the terrified De Courcy, leaping forward to the rescue.

Acting on the hint, two or three of the most active of the light infantry rushed from the ranks in the direction taken by the officer.

Desborough saw the movement, and his exertions to defeat its object became, considering the loss of blood he had sustained from his wounds, almost Herculean. He now stood on the extreme verge of the precipice, where he paused for a moment as if utterly exhausted with his previous efforts. De Courcy was now within a few feet of his unhappy friend, who still struggled ineffectually to free himself, when the settler, suddenly collecting all his energy into a final and desparate effort, raised the unfortunate Grantham from the ground, and with a loud and exulting laugh, dashed his foot violently against the edge of the crag, and threw himself backward into the hideous abyss.

A cry of horror from the lips of De Courcy was answered by a savage shout of vengeance from the British ranks. On rushed the line with their glittering bayonets, and at a pace *which* scarcely left their enemies time to sue for, much less *obtain* quarter—shrieks and groans rent the atmosphere, and

above the horrid din, might be heard the wild and greeting cry of the vulture and the buzzard, as the mangled bodies of the Americans rolled from rock to rock, crashing the autumnal leaves and dried underwood in their fall, some hanging suspended by their rent garments to the larger trees encountered in their course—yet by far the greater number falling into the bottom of a chasm into which the sunbeam had never yet penetrated. The picked and whitened bones may be seen, shining through the deep gloom that envelopes every part of the abyss, even to this day.

THE END.

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ERRATA.

VOLUME I.

In the inscription, for "500 men," read "720 men."
Page 4, line 33, for "adversify," read "diversify."
" 44, " 10, for "Brava," read "Bravo."
" 78, " 4, for "undisputable," read "indisputable."
" 81, " 29, for "sound of promise," read "word of promise."
" 138, " 17, for "unmeasurably," read "immeasurably."
" 144, " 17, for "in regard of," read "in regard to."
" 145, " 28, for "there is," read "there are."
" 166, " 32, for "Identlical," read "Identical."
" 177, " 33, for "to saying," read "so saying."
" 185, " 9, for "last two files," read "last few files."
" 212, " 7, for "metamarphosed," read "metamorphosed."

VOLUME II.

Page 11, line 19, for "scuddling," read "scudding."
" 11, " 20, for "from these," read "from the noise."
" 44, " 5, for "vengeane," read "vengeance."
" 57, " 13, for "Buvouaced," read "Bivouacked."
" 58, " 30, for "in the bear skin," read "into the bear skin."
" 95, " 9, for "rerturn," read "return,"
" 160, " 5, leave out the word "then."
" 162, " 9, for resideut," read "resident."
" 165, " 35, for "bloop," read "blood."
" 166, " 14 and 17, for "heaven," read "Heaven."
" 170, " 17, for "surrendered," read "I surrendered."
" 175, " 24, for "if," read "it."
" 177, " 14, for "have," read "had."
" 182, " 24, for "on," read "of."
" 193, " 13, for "condition on which," read "the period when."
" 209, " 12, for "shall," read "should."
" 212 " 21, for "only reward," read "full reward."

ADVERTISEMENT.

NEW EDITION OF "WACOUSTA."

THE "CANADIAN BROTHERS" being, as it will be observed, a continuation of "WACOUSTA"—an abridged and very imperfect edition of which has been printed in the United States, and even it being nearly out of type, a revised republication of the latter work, containing all the passages which have been omitted in the American reprint, will issue from the press during the ensuing summer.

As the publication will be got up precisely in the same style with the present work, and at the same diminished price to subscribers, an opportunity will thus be offered to the possessors of the "Canadian Brothers" to complete their set.

Montreal, January, 1840.

EXTRACTS

FROM NOTICES OF WACOUSTA, BY THE LONDON PRESS.

The merit of this novel consists in the spirit of its historical pictures, which possess at least the consistency of truth. The writer displays no ordinary share of graphic power, and he has the rare talent of "rendering a fearful battle in music." His descriptions of scenery are well executed, but unfortunately they are rare. —*Athenæum.*

As a lively and admirable description of these scenes of cruel warfare, as a faithful picture of the wild and desolate country, and as affording an accurate view of the state of the colonies at the time when a mistaken policy tempted us to waste our blood and treasure upon their conquest and preservation, these volumes must

be received with pleasure. The work lays but small claim to the character of a novel—but it possesses the higher merits of historical truth, and turns up a soil which the plough of literature has hitherto hardly entered. On that account it is valuable.—*Atlas.*

We felt as little disposed to notice this novel as we do the majority of those fictions which come forth in endless abundance, with no apparent tendency but enfeebling the character of our literature. We opened *Wacousta* with much the same feeling of distaste, but we soon discovered it to be a work of higher order, well written and full of animated, bold and natural incidents—Its pictures of American scenery and Indian warfare: of the vengeful spirit of the Red Skin and the iniquity of the White Skin; of the desperate ferocity of the outlaw, and the enduring tenderness of woman, are worthy of our best writers of Historical Romance.—*Morning Post.*

We have just read with the greatest interest, a new novel named "Wacousta, or the Prophecy," by the author of "Ecarté," and can warmly recommend it, as one of the most attractive fictions we have recently perused. The tradition on which it is founded, was imparted to the author, while serving in Canada, and this is interwoven with wild descriptions and sketches of character, quite equal to the highly gifted Cooper, while it possesses the charm, to English readers, in which that great writer is deficient, viz: the persons most deserving of exciting sympathy and admiration are all British. The principal scenes occur in a garrison, and the author has betrayed no ordinary talent, in investing all the characters, usually found in such a situation, with some distinguishing point of interest, which makes the reader long to hear more of them. The noble, haughty, and stern character of the native Red Skins must always render them a powerful theme: these have been treated most skilfully, and with a complete originality which was no easy task, considering the various novels lately founded on this extraordinary race. In occasional short digressions, the author evinces much knowledge of the refined feelings of human nature, and perhaps to this may be ascribed the unusual good taste of abstaining from those tedious love scenes, and romantic dialogues, which, in the common run of novels, are so apt to disgust the fastidious. One powerful tale of feeling is related with a truth and force which will absorb the reader's attention deeply, and gratify even the most romantic and melancholy. Altogether we know not when we have perused a work so well calculated to suit the various tastes which exist among readers of fiction.—*Miss Sheridan, Court Magazine.*

The scene of this tale is laid chiefly in the Canadas, and the time *of action is about* the middle of the last century—an epoch in the

new world, as well as the old, rife with all the elements of change and revolution. The tale is an interesting one, for it abounds in character and incident, and the scenic descriptions have the advantage of being drawn from life, the author having himself, as he informs us, been familiar with the local peculiarities of every landscape he undertakes to delineate. His introductory sketch of the North Western settlement of America is drawn with the minute geographical accuracy of a Guthrie or a Robertson, and affords a fair voucher for his fidelity in other matters. We like *Wacousta* the better because there is no sickly sentimentality about it; an air of truth and reality pervades it from the first to the last chapter.—*Sun.*

The perusal of this novel has afforded us more satisfaction than any thing of the kind which has fallen within the range of our reading for many a long day. Perhaps we may have met with volumes containing a deeper seated interest, but rarely any that have united so much simplicity with eloquence of style.

The tale—and it is one that will please every reader—is laid in America, "a spot," as the writer says, "hitherto untouched by the wand of the modern novelist." Charmingly has he occupied the new ground, and beautifully has he described the localities and the incidents to which they give rise in the course of his work.

It will require but slender thought to perceive, by the enthusiastic ardor of the pen, that the author has been bred to a military life, and that he is a man of very superior acquirements, and possessed of intellect and taste that must render him an ornament in the tented field, as well as the field of literature.

If we had space for extracts we should injure the work by giving them, for it is only by the combined effect of the whole, that we can estimate one of the most delightful stories that has issued from the press for some time.—*Satirist.*

The plot and incidents of this military novel, the scene of which is laid in Canada, about the middle of the last century, are altoge ther of the most striking description, and illustrate more than any work of fiction we have lately perused the proud and inflexible character of the North American Indians, whose fierce hostility to the English, soon after the conquest of the Canadas from France, as exemplified in their but too successful attempts, by stratagem, on the several garrisons along the frontier, has formed the chief groundwork of the author. To those who would learn something of the wiliness and subtilty of argument which distinguish the American Indian, we strongly recommend the two council scenes in the second volume, both of which are highly illustrative of the blended cunning and magnanimity of spirit of this extraordinary and rapidly disappearing people. The main interest of the story is attached to the fortunes of the only two fortresses that have escaped the general

fate; and which, cut off from all communication by the besieging savages, undergo every privation and anxiety that can be endured by men so perilously situated. The chief scene of action is laid in the neighbourhood of Detroit, the scenery around which is described, not only with a graphic hand, but with a fidelity that proves the author to be perfectly familiar with his subject. To detail the plot more fully, however, would be to take from the intense interest that attaches to the story throughout. We will merely content ourselves, therefore, with adding, that the whole three volumes is a succession of rapid and stirring adventure, over which the reader will scarcely suffer himself to pause until he has arrived at the close. The treatment of the brave, noble, but unfortunate Frank Halloway—the sufferings of the gentle Charles de Haldimar—the departure and adventures of the two officers on their almost hopeless mission to warn the distant fortress of its impending danger—the subsequent fall of that fortress and the fate of its gallant defenders—the capture of the schooner in the Sinclair—the fearful story of Wacousta's wrongs, and the agony of Clara de Haldimar while listening to it in that warrior's tent—all these are instances of the deep and unswerving interest with which the author has contrived to invest a large proportion of the individuals who figure in his pages.— *United Service.*

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